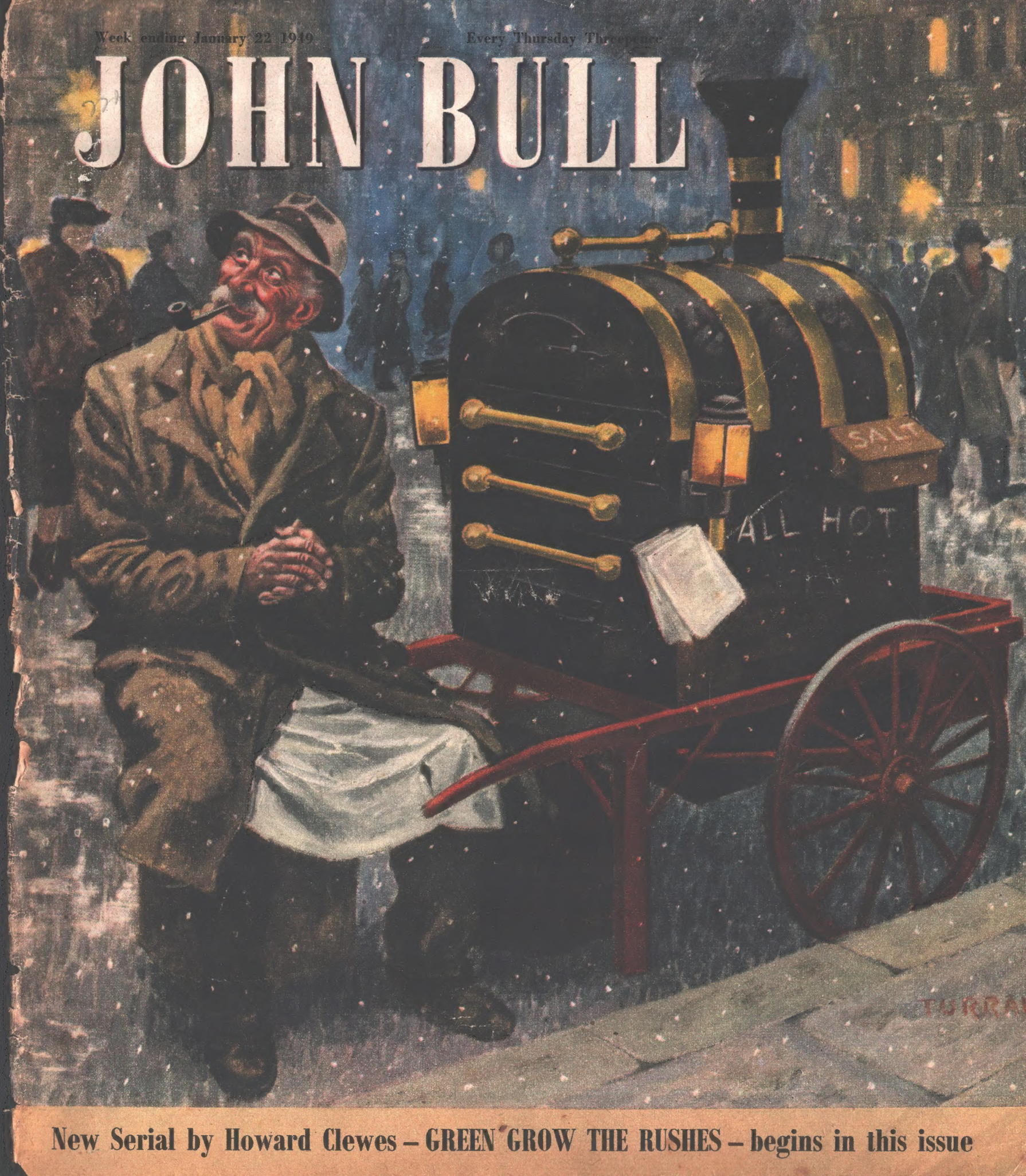
Week ending January 22 1949 Every Thursday Threepence

JOHN BULL



New Serial by Howard Clewes – GREEN GROW THE RUSHES – begins in this issue

Smart to her fingertips...

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L'Onglex gives you smart, lustrous nails in two minutes. It stays gay and bright through days of work and wear!

In six smart shades . . .

The electricity surcharge

AN ADJUSTMENT of domestic tariffs for electricity has been introduced at the request of the Government. To curtail use of current during the peak periods, roughly one-third of a penny will be added to the normal running charge per unit during *three* winter months ; but the normal charge will be reduced by one-tenth of a penny per unit during the remaining *nine* months of the year.

Domestic consumers must use less electricity—

between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.—up to noon when the weather is very cold . . .

between 4 p.m. and 5.30-6 p.m.—and whenever you hear a B.B.C. warning.

These times apply 5 days a week, Monday to Friday.

Despite all handicaps, British Electricity are supplying 10% more electricity than last year and 80% more than before the war.

BRITISH ELECTRICITY

January, 1949

Longer sleep .... shorter queues?

THE Government say there's only one way to fill the shops and shorten the queues — we've got to earn more dollars with the export drive.

Fine! But this means hard work, and hard work takes energy. We're all working pretty hard as it is, either at home or out at a job. And most of us get pretty tired. Why, we often wake up tired!

We certainly need more energy. How can we get it?

Our energy is controlled by food and sleep. Food is rationed, sleep isn't. If we slept longer, could we work harder? Would more sleep mean more production, shorter queues?

It depends on the *kind* of sleep. You prove this for yourself when you wake up tired in the morning after quite a long night's sleep.

Only deep sleep has the power to restore during the night the energy we use during the day.

That is why Horlicks is so valuable. It promotes the deep sleep you need. Drink Horlicks at bedtime, and you'll wake up brimming with energy. Production drive? Washing-up drive? You can take it!

HORLICKS

6 SHADES

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Standard, Extra Long and Curl size; in Golden Blonde, Silver Grey, Black, Brown. Standard also in White. And the new "Shellon"; Covered Tortoiseshell style.

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4 SIZES

1018

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MACLEAN Brand Stomach Powder

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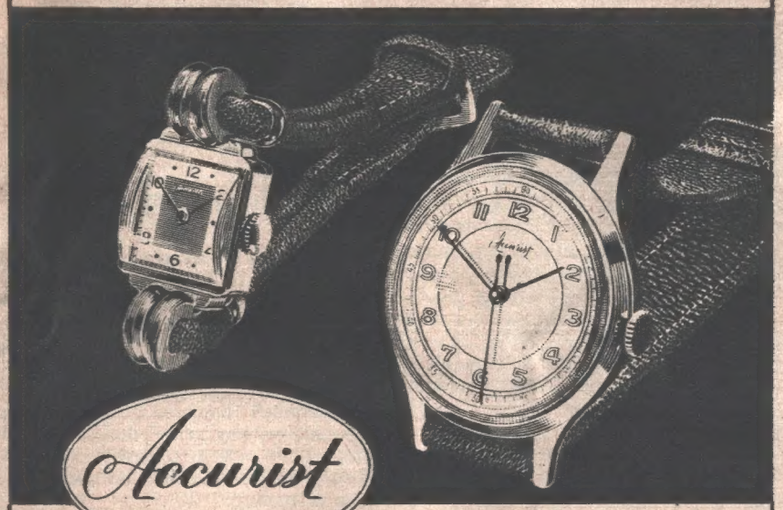

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Hair that is dull, thin and spoiled by dandruff needs treatment. It needs nourishment. It needs Silvikrin. A few minutes finger-tip massage with Silvikrin each day will soon bring back the gleam of life and vigorous growth to tired hair. Try it and see!

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DAILY EXPRESS
"It kept me bound to my seat from start to finish."
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"Sustains an assault on the emotions that few other movies have ever done." *Ewart Hodgson*

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"Never loses grip on your imagination. You are on tenter-hooks all the time." *Lionel Collier*

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Manikin Moments . . .

Soothe away the austerities of the day with the Mild Havana Flavour of these grand little cigars.

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Dewar's "White Label" SCOTCH WHISKY

Och! the THOUGHT of it!

Maximum retail prices
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As fixed by
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'SOUPY' says:
So little meat?
A guest to dinner?
Here's how to make
The meal a winner.

SYMINGTON'S
VITE-GRAVY
-is simply grand

A-oh! Gorgeous savoury gravy —like mother used to make . . . Use Vite-Gravy also in shepherd's pie, meat pies, stews—for extra-fine flavour! 3d. and 9d.

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"Top of my shopping list—*always*"

AND NO WONDER! For Carnation Milk makes lovely creamy puddings and custards and it's delicious in tea, coffee and other beverages. Remember, Carnation is pure, fresh cows' milk, from which part of the water has been removed by evaporation. Therefore to make rich creamy milk you simply *add* water as directed on the label.

It's good to see the healthy body take winter in its stride. Given adequate supplies of the 'protective' vitamin A and 'sunshine' vitamin D, there's little need to worry. These are the vitamins which help to resist infection, which fight for you against colds and influenza. They are richly stored in Crookes Halibut Oil. To take this daily during winter is a very wise insurance.

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C48

JOHN BULL

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JANUARY 22, 1949 VOLUME 85 NUMBER 2221

Illiterate Youth

THE CHILDREN have gone back after the Christmas holidays to schools that are still coping gallantly with shortages of staff and accommodation—trying to turn the blueprint for the national new deal in education into a reality, but perhaps not making much headway, as yet.

It is significant that young people coming up for National Service and civilian jobs are reported by experts to show an appallingly low level of education. Reading and writing ability are both, on average, much weaker than they ought to be.

And while champions have come forward to defend modern youth against the Archbishops' attacks on its morals and manners, nobody has spoken up for its scholarship.

Boys and girls today, it is alleged, don't learn as much as they used to, because they find too many distractions—films, radio, sport—and too few of them have the time or the inclination for serious reading.

Yet only reading produces really literate citizens.

So we are up against a paradox—that with a better educational system than ever before many children are learning less.

What's the remedy? Surely it is better teaching—to make education more interesting.

That means building many more schools and training a lot more teachers, so as to reduce the size of the classes and increase the quality of the instruction.

Individual attention from a competent teacher can alter a child's whole outlook on study.

George Tomlinson, Minister of Education, is already fighting hard for his vast family of schoolchildren. We earnestly hope the Government will put all available resources behind him.

Secretive Railways

THE RAILWAY EXECUTIVE — which runs *your* railways—is discussing how better to "indicate the destination" of trains.

It shouldn't take the Executive long to find out.

The public, fed up with asking harassed porters and ticket inspectors questions which ought to be unnecessary, can tell it what to do: *Label all trains, platforms and stations clearly in large letters.*

In other words, don't keep the essential facts of travel a secret from the travellers, as seems to have been accepted railway policy in the past.

There is no reason why every train should not carry easily-read placards saying exactly where it is going.

There is no reason why every platform should not blazon the identity of the next train out or in.

There is no reason why stations should not be labelled clearly both by day and by night.

The loudspeaker system now in vogue is no substitute for large, unmistakable notices. Stations are noisy places, and crucial words are very easily lost in a roar of escaping steam.

For the cost of a few thousand notice boards of the right kind, railway travel can be made easier and less bewildering for millions.

Still Room for Charity

FOR THE FIRST TIME in their history, the hospitals are to stop begging. And about time, too!

We applaud the instruction by Aneurin Bevan that collecting boxes should be called in and advertising appeals stopped.

Under the National Health Service the hospitals' financial position is now assured. They can do their job properly — not necessarily extravagantly—without being hampered by lack of money.

It was always a bad thing that medical and surgical treatment for millions should be subject to the chances of private charity.

After all, the charitable spirit still has plenty of scope. Nothing stops people from giving or bequeathing money to hospitals. And anyone who wants to help in practical ways can join one of the new "guilds of hospital friends" which are being organized all over the country.

Labour shortage makes spare-time work for hospitals even more valuable than the gifts of money with which well-to-do people formerly salved their consciences.

Lonely Men—Why?

SPARE A THOUGHT for lonely men—the crews of lighthouses round our coasts in midwinter.

Every year some of them are cut off by gales. They lose the rest and freedom from responsibility which is their due. They lose the fresh food they need. They are imprisoned for long extra weeks in their austere towers, trembling always with the thunder of the waves.

Theirs is a tough life, and it is time that science came to their aid.

Trinity House, an official corporation, is responsible for the lighthousemen's welfare. It is a conservative body which carries out faithfully its duty of making the sea lanes safe.

But it needs new ideas.

There is no longer any good reason why its key men should be marooned for months at a time on lonely, seaswept rocks or in lightships far from land.

All these jobs could now surely be done by robot appliances with remote control. What is Trinity House waiting for?

Murder in a Bottle

IT SHOULD NOT BE possible for citizens of London, Glasgow and other cities to be killed by alcohol poisoning.

Yet it is happening again.

There are two kinds of alcohol, methyl and ethyl. Methyl kills; ethyl does not, unless taken to excess.

To sell methyl alcohol as a drink for humans is murder. It should be punished as murder is punished. Then the deaths from "hooch" will stop.

BY VIM! THAT'S QUICK!

VIM—the fastest, smoothest cleaner!

V 180 357 Selling Agents: Hudson & Knight Limited

When did you last eat a Mars bar s-l-o-w-l-y?

Mars are more marvellous now

Coated with milkier chocolate
Extra thick layer of new buttery flavoured caramel
Delicious chocolate lightning-whip centre

–and still only 4d!

Such Suds!

AND NO COUPONS

BROBAT SUDS! Most safe, helpful, economical washer you can buy! Its 'live lather' rolls out the dirt *without boiling*. It washes clothes whiter, brighter, cleaner, leaves no 'scum.' BROBAT SUDS gives gleam and sparkle to crockery, glass, white woodwork, tiles, etc. Get a packet of

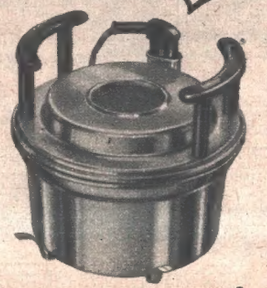
New BROBAT 8½D Suds

ANOTHER BROBAT PRODUCT

If you have any difficulty in obtaining Brobat Products write: Brobat Mnfg. Co. Ltd., Wandle Bank, Wimbledon, S.W.19

Pick a pack of SAXA the pick of packet salt

Anything you can cook I can cook BETTER EASIER CHEAPER



Plug in the "Elecooker" anywhere there is electricity and it cooks all types of food perfectly—Joints, Vegetables, Cakes, etc.—even a complete meal. *Radiant heat* action retains all vitamins and prevents burning. Self contained, it is *waterless* and the minimum of fat is required. Ideal for those with limited living space, as it cooks away from the kitchen. 200-220 or 220-240v. A.C. or D.C. No special power needed.

COSTS ONLY £3.17.6 *Complete with Recipe Book. Ask your local dealer or send direct for details.*

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My pipe tastes grand WITH AFRIKANDER 3/7 PER OZ

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BREATHE . . . Vapex Inhalant. Put a drop on your handkerchief each morning. A drop on your pillow at night gives protection and comfort while you sleep.

BREATHE . . . The new Vapex Inhaler is convenient, unobtrusive and effective for outdoor use. Simply pull off the cap. Easily re-charged from Standard Vapex bottle.

RUB IN . . . Vapex Volatol for Chest Colds. A stimulating ointment-liniment—warming, soothing, penetrating. Non-Greasy—does not stain skin or clothing. Ideal for children's colds.

Breathe the vapour ▲ from your handkerchief—or ▲ from the Vapex Inhaler—and ▲ rub your chest with VAPEX - VOLATOL

Of all Chemists

Vapex 2/6 Inhaler 1/3 Vapex-Volatol 1/9

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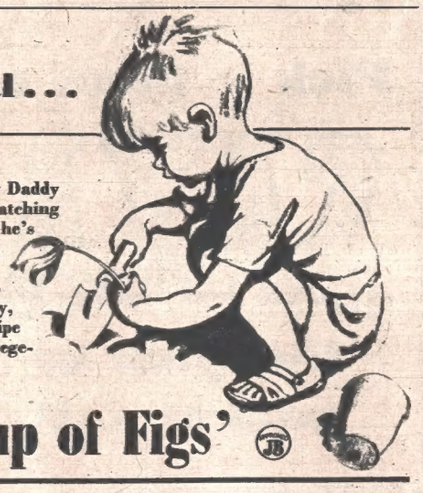
REMEMBER YOUR A.B.C. . .

Apples Bulmer's Cider

2½ lbs. of apples to every 5-glass flagon

H. P. BULMER & CO. LTD. HEREFORD

It's only natural . . .



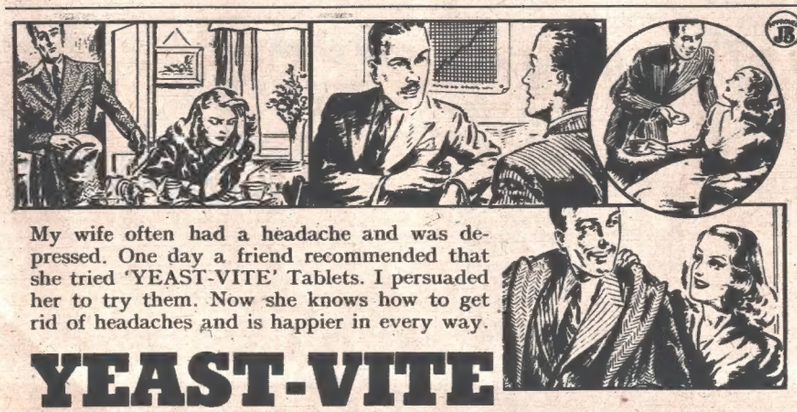
. . . for the little chap to want to copy Daddy—busy in the garden—planting, watching things grow—always happily occupied, he's seldom bored or fretful. But should some minor upset put him out of sorts, then Mother naturally turns to 'California Syrup of Figs'. This kindly, pleasant laxative contains the juice of ripe figs with an extract of senna. Purely vegetable and naturally nice.

'California Syrup of Figs'

THANKS TO GOOD BRITISH FARMING

A WINTER'S NIGHT and there, in the glass of beer you are drinking, glints some of the long summer sunshine. What grand company malt and hops make for each other when the brewers' art goes hand in hand with the farmers' untiring skill!

Beers brewed by WHITBREAD Naturally



My wife often had a headache and was depressed. One day a friend recommended that she tried 'YEAST-VITE' Tablets. I persuaded her to try them. Now she knows how to get rid of headaches and is happier in every way.

YEAST-VITE

If you suffer from HEADACHES, NEURALGIA, RHEUMATIC PAINS, NERVE PAINS OR SLEEPLESSNESS try Yeast-Vite "Pick-Me-Up" Tablets at once. 1/6 and 3/8

Battery Power FOR ½° an hour

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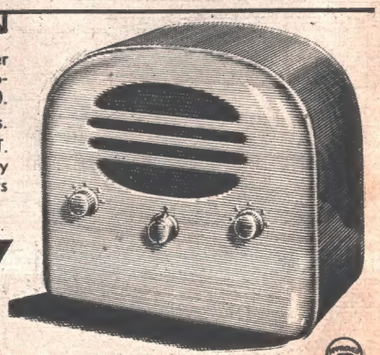


EVER READY MODEL 'H' ALL-DRY RECEIVER

Ask your dealer for a demonstration or write for leaflet to:
The Ever Ready Co. (G.B.) Ltd., Hercules Place, Holloway, London, N.7.

FRANCE ISN'T FINISHED

by MATTHEW HALTON

For months the outward picture of a politically disordered, unstable France has been the big worry of the Western World. Here, after an on-the-spot investigation, Matthew Halton gives a hopeful report

SOME AMERICANS and some British have been openly saying: "We had better write France off. We had better restore the strength and power of Germany."

The brutality of this is exceeded only by its silliness. Write off France and we write off Europe and all our hopes.

Admittedly, at a time when, more than ever, she is the key to Europe, and when all the grand designs for a United Europe and an Atlantic confederation would come to nothing without her, France is still sick.

But there are many reasons to believe that, given five years of peace, France will throw off her sickness and become again one of the pillars of the democratic world.

In the last few months I have travelled in France making a study of the French economy and French recovery. That physical recovery has been astonishing.

To leave Paris and visit the farms, the factories, the shipyards and the reconstruction projects was to have a revelation of the continuing health, wealth, energy and inventiveness of France. Her recovery effort has been second only to Britain's. She is producing ten per cent more than before the war.

One morning recently, half an hour after someone had remarked to me that French science had lost its genius, I stumbled on the fact that French scientists had just discovered the secret of manufacturing penicillin synthetically.

Wigan Man's Tribute

On the same day I visited some textile mills with an English expert, the manager of five Wigan cotton mills, and he remarked several times: "Why, their methods are better than ours! If this is French industry there's nothing to worry about." And also on the same day, a French factory manager told me proudly that his employees were "as diligent and hard-working as ever."

Once, in Rouen, a textile manufacturer showed me pictures of his factory as it was after the R.A.F. had destroyed it in 1944. It was a completely burnt-out ruin. But the factory which had been rebuilt on the same spot was the finest, cleanest and most efficient cotton mill I have seen.

The French have not lost their old genius for improvisation. One day I watched the building of a great new bridge at Conflans Fin-d'Oise, at the confluence of the Seine and Oise rivers. The original bridge had been destroyed by the French Army in retreat in 1940. It was rebuilt, and destroyed again by the R.A.F. before the Normandy landing. It was then repaired by the Germans—and blown up for the third time by the French Resistance to hamper the German retreat.

Now it was nearing completion again; and it was made of steel salvaged from Mulberry, the floating port taken by the Allies to Normandy.

When the war ended no less than 7,500 French bridges had been destroyed. In three years 6,500 of them have been rebuilt. They have rebuilt 100 miles of bridges. They have resurfaced half of their 500,000,000 square yards of road.

Almost Prewar Level

Another striking achievement has been the rebuilding of the merchant fleet. When the war began France had 3,000,000 tons of shipping. When it ended she had only 800,000 tons. Today she is almost back to 3,000,000 tons. France is building more shipping than any country in the world except Britain. Yet when we saw the French ports and shipyards after the war we wondered how they could ever function again.

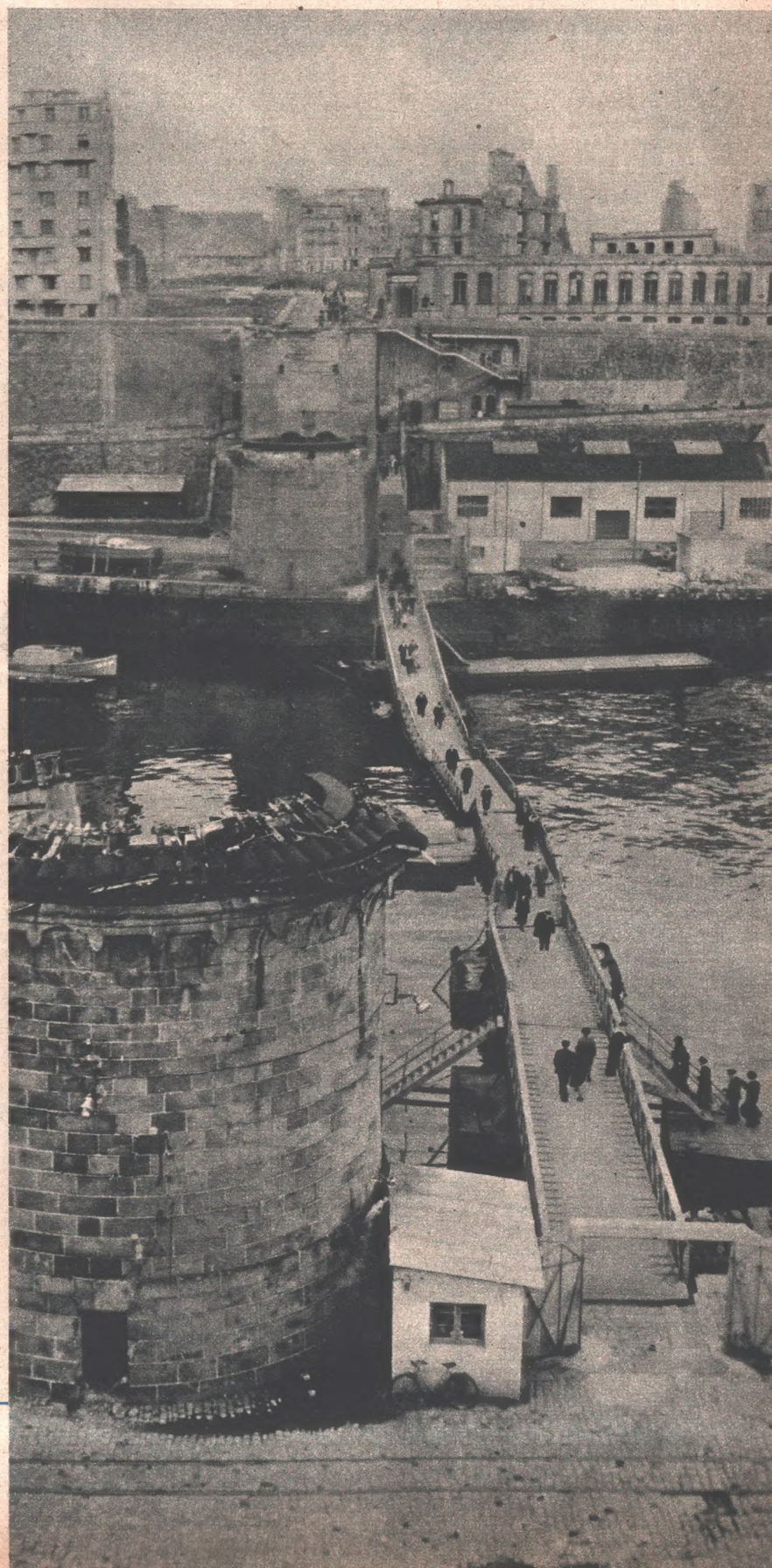
There are many other proofs of the basic economic soundness of France. What then is her malady? Why do we say she is sick?

The answer is that the problem of French recovery is not fundamentally economic or physical, but psychological and moral. With a somewhat greater effort and with more mechanization of agriculture France could feed herself abundantly and help to feed others. France has everything necessary for an economic and military renaissance except the most important thing of all—and that is public morality and the civic spirit.

This sad lack of national self-discipline is immediately reflected in the inability of the French Government to govern, to enforce the laws.

Until the Government can enforce the law it cannot halt inflation, the black market, the tax scandal and corruption. Until it can halt inflation and corruption France cannot make a full economic recovery. Until she can make a full recovery she cannot be a pillar of Europe and the Atlantic Pact. It is not too tenuous, I think, to say that the recovery and safety of the Western World depends on moral recovery in France.

Any foreigner, especially if he is an Anglo-Saxon, who walks from the Opera to the Madeleine in Paris—a distance of 400 yards—is sure to be accosted between



Brest still makes do with a "temporary" bridge. But say we'd had 7,500 bridges down?

five and twenty times by touts who will sidle up to him and murmur: "Want change today, Mister?" They want to change travellers' cheques at the black market rate.

The official rate is 1,060 francs to the pound; the black market rate is anything up to 1,300 francs to the pound. The rate for the dollar is higher still.

If the foreigner says "Yes" the tout will lead him to some *bistro* or café in a quiet street and change his cheques. But furtiveness is not necessary. The cashiers in some hotels openly accept American travellers' cheques at the illegal rate. It has been officially stated that only half the travellers' cheques cashed in France come into the national treasury. The rest are bought on behalf of wealthy people who are afraid of war or inflation and want to feather their nests in America. So France is bled.

That is only one example of French disregard for law, and of Government inability to enforce it (and of what must be corruption in high places, because the racket would not be hard to stop).

Dodge Income Tax

There is a worse example: the widespread evasion of income tax. A French treasury official said recently that only half the income tax levied in a year is ever paid, and he admitted that evasion was easy—by all except the workers, the teachers, the civil servants and all who are paid a fixed wage or salary.

A third example, more serious still, is inflation.

The more the Government legislates to check inflation the worse inflation gets, and the cost of living for the workers is now ferocious. Their real wages are only sixty per cent of what they were two years ago. Most of them are forced to spend three-quarters of their wages on food alone. The recent mining strike in France was called by the Communist leaders in a deliberate and avowed effort to wreck the Marshall Plan, but even the anti-Communist Socialist and Catholic unions supported it at first—because their wages are too small to live on.

Near Lens one day a miner's wife said to me angrily, when I mentioned the Cominform: "I've never heard of the blinding Cominform! I only know that we can't afford a bit of fat for the kids' buns once or twice a week!"

Yet France has food in abundance—for those who can buy it. The Government's decrees against food speculators become more and more Draconian—on paper. The guilty ones are even liable to the death penalty—on paper. But nothing effective is done.

De Gaulle Tempts

If the French, with all their verve, intelligence and courage, had also the national self-discipline of the British, they would be the greatest nation in Europe.

The French people realize their lack of *civisme*, and they regret it deeply. The need for a moral recovery is on many lips. And that is why many of the French are looking hopefully to de Gaulle.

Now, *le grand Charles* may be a great man, but his accession to power might well be disastrous. Stubborn, proud, and intoxicated with his *mystique* of France resurgent, he might precipitate civil war. There would certainly be friction at once between Britain and France, politically, economically and militarily.

The best, perhaps the only, hope for France is that the present coalition Government of harassed and manoeuvring but moderate and well-meaning men, the Socialists and the Popular Republicans, will pull through. And there are signs that they may.

There are indications that they may check inflation, that they are beginning effectively to combat the black market, and that they are preparing a frontal attack on fiscal corruption. There is still some defeatism and some pessimism in France, but on the whole her morale is rising.

There is good evidence of this rising morale, incidentally, in the new French Army, evidence of a burning desire to rebuild the greatness of the Republic. Over a year ago, during a visit to France, Field Marshal Montgomery's discerning eye saw that something interesting was happening in the French Army, especially in its training camps.

"These are the best training schools I have ever seen," he said.

Since then I have heard that a spirit comparable to that of 1914 has arisen in the new French Army; that among French trainees today there is a dedication to selflessness and to the task of restoring the stability and prestige of France.

One thing that worries every Frenchman, from Thorez to de Gaulle and from the chimney sweep to the millionaire, is the Anglo-American decision to rebuild the strength of Germany. The news that we intended to restore the productivity of the Ruhr—the greatest iron, steel and coal area in Europe—and to restore it to the free control of the German Government as soon as that Government is formed, united Communists and de Gaullists alike in bitterness and wrath.

Is This Realism?

"But what's so wrong with our attitude?" argued an American statesman in Paris recently. "We Anglo-Saxons are pragmatists in a harshly realistic world. If we would ally ourselves with Communism against Germany when Germany was the greater menace, why not with Germany when Communism is the greater menace?"

Here is the French reply:

"Certainly, if Germany were strong, and no longer ambitious, she would be a mighty blessing to the Atlantic union and to Western safety. Moreover, it is true that there will never be a healthy Europe without a healthy Germany. We French are actually taking the lead in advocating a European union that will include Germany. While there are no depths to which the German character cannot sink, there are no heights to which it could not rise if it were rightly directed. Let us harness Germany, with the rest of us, to the chariot of the new Europe. But let us make sure it is harnessed! We must have absolutely watertight controls, especially of the Ruhr."

It is pleasant and tempting to consider what a splendid union this Western Europe would be if the French and Germans abandoned their ancient fratricide for all time, in co-operation with the British.

If Western Europe could combine its qualities—the intelligence and lucidity of France, the strength and stability of Britain and the power and singlemindedness of a Germany diverted from nihilism—it would be a greater force in the world perhaps than either the United States or Russia.

In close alliance with the North Americans, we would have a grant confederation whose strength could ensure temporary safety and whose prosperity in freedom would be the best defence of all against Communism.

It is almost romantic to be optimistic these days—but is it altogether fantastic to hope that we might thus have peace in our time and perhaps beyond?

The answer depends largely on France. If France fails to solve her problems the whole design will come tumbling down. But I for one am sincerely convinced that she will not fail. Her heart is sound. To "write off France" would be a mistake and a crime.

MURDER MAN

by WILLIAM J. GAGE

From the finding of the body to the court scene when the suspect appears in the dock, Scotland Yard's murder expert has to plan, probe, check

BILL CHAPMAN HAS NOT read a detective story since he was a boy. He finds them dull.

This is not surprising since, during the past few years, Chapman's daily round has included hanging from a parapet at Upton Park while trying to prevent a wanted man (and himself) from dropping on to the live rails of the District Line, leading a knock-down and drag-out Flying Squad raid on a gang of airport thieves, and investigating such varied forms of murder as a taxi-driver shot through the nape of the neck, an old woman bound and suffocated in a trunk, a young woman strangled in an air-raid shelter, a child bludgeoned and shot twice through the chest, and an unidentified woman whose nude body was found wrapped in sacks and floating in the River Lea.

Chapman, a grandfather twice over, is Scotland Yard's Murder Man No. 1.

Blue-eyed, blue-suited, never divorced from his pipe once his two early morning cigarettes are finished, stocky and sympathetic, with a passion for growing roses in his garden at Eltham and a habit of winking his left lid when concentrating, Superintendent "Cherub" Chapman does not look like this country's biggest enemy of murderers. For that matter, he does not look like the head of the Flying Squad, which is his official position.

He reviews his past triumphs with a puff at his pipe and a refusal to glamorize them.

"Dramatic?" he says. "I can't really remember anything except a lot of hard work. Maybe I always got the difficult cases."

The fact is that he has always stuck to the Scotland Yard formula, which is determination, clear thinking and an enormous amount of patience. It is a formula which has made our murder men the most successful, if not the most spectacular, in the world.

The machine is large and, in the early stages, the routine is unvaried. The discovery of the body is reported to the local police station, where there is always one C.I.D. man on duty. If the Detec-

Chapman (right) and dead man's daughter, after Everitt murder: the case was almost written off

tive Inspector or Divisional Detective Inspector is not at the "nick" or patrolling his "manor," the news is telephoned to his home. If he has gone out to visit friends or a pub or a theatre, he will have left word where he can be found.

At the same time, the C.I.D. man at the station sends an "A.S." message to the Yard. There the duty officer, if information is available, warns other divisions to which the murderer may escape; he also contacts the Area Superintendent responsible.

In the old days, there were five area superintendents, who became a legendary group as the Big Five, though they are now more like the Big Ten or Big Dozen. The Yard fingerprint experts and photographers are alerted. A message is sent to the chief executive, Assistant Commissioner Ronald Howe. Murder, the ultimate crime against society, gets everybody on the hop.

The scene of the crime is soon in danger of overcrowding. The Area Superintendent, the D.D.I., the D.I., the fingerprint expert and the photographer are joined by the coroner's officer and, sometimes, the police pathologist.

Questioning Begins

People in the house are detained for questioning; desks are opened and papers examined. Friends whose letters have been found, tradesmen who have submitted bills, and any other contacts who can be discovered are interviewed straight away by junior officers. With the ordinary citizen, the number of such contacts is not large; things become more difficult with those whose acquaintances have been too many or too few: prostitutes or recluses.

It may be that the murderer has been seen or identified or accurately described. In that case, the Flying Squad, with Chapman in control, will get weaving. The Squad, despite the frequency with which its activities appear in the newspapers, numbers only eighty-one detectives and thirty-two drivers. The vehicles range from the humdrum greengrocer's van to the familiar movie roadster. Every car has two-way radio and a high-speed engine. And every one of the Squad detectives is handpicked for both brains and brawn.

The fingerprint man, having photographed what prints are available at the scene of the crime, hurries back to the Yard to check with the files. Since murder is not a crime for professionals in this country, it is comparatively rare for the murderer to have a criminal record. If he has, his description can be circulated immediately.

But the prints provide only corroborative evidence; they have no primary value as a means of conviction. In the recent murder at Maidenhead, for example, when an old lady was suffocated in a box, Chapman found fingerprints in the house which tallied with those of a known criminal. The man was traced to St. Albans and detained for questioning.

"But the fingerprints might have been made at any time," says Chapman. "We still had to put him in the house at the moment of the murder."

This, in default of other evidence, can be done only by interrogation; and it is here that the detective must step warily, to avoid falling foul of the Judges' Rules. These lay down that, if a detective has made up his mind to charge a man with a crime, he must warn him before he takes a statement from him. The suspect must not be questioned unfairly or for long periods. A confession may not be obtained by any kind of trick, threat or persuasion.

There are rare occasions when a single fingerprint is almost enough in itself to convict a man: as in the murder of June Devaney in Queen's Park Hospital, Blackburn. There, the murderer's prints on a bottle in the ward were almost conclusive evidence (though in fact supported at the trial by other evidence of bloodstained clothing). But the man who made the prints had no criminal record; he could have been any one of millions. But for the special nature of the crime, he might have got away.

Mass Fingerprinting

Only because there was an obvious danger that the murderer might commit similar crimes if not caught at once did Chief Inspector Capstick adopt the unheard-of procedure of fingerprinting the whole male population of a large town. Capstick checked through 40,000 fingerprints taken in Blackburn alone. Among them he found the twin to the print on the bottle in the hospital ward.

Fingerprinting has been this century's most important single scientific aid to detection.

But since 1936 it has been supported by the batteries of brains and instruments in the Police Laboratory: microscopes, ultra-violet rays, oblique lighting photography, all the resources of chemical analysis. It was at the Police Laboratory, now moved from Hendon to a new home in the Yard itself, that the Potters Bar remains were reconstructed and proved, to the satisfaction of a coroner's jury, to be those of Albert Welch.

Evidence at murder trials by Police Laboratory scientists seldom fails to make the headlines, but at the Lab. itself they insist that science is never going to replace the traditional painstaking methods of detection. It is the man in the field who is the vital figure, not the boys at the backroom benches.

The scientists can sometimes provide the corroborative evidence to convict the murderer whom the detective has tracked down; they can seldom give the detective information which will alone direct him to the murderer.

When Chapman was investigating the murder of a twelve-year-old girl in Wales, he found at the scene of the crime a few wisps of cloth. The scientists worked on the fibres and reported to Chapman that they came from a sports coat of a specified cloth and colour. But this did not carry Chapman any further forward.

He could not arrest every man owning a sports coat of that common description. Even if he did, he still had no proof that the man was near the scene of the crime at the time the murder was presumed to have been committed; he could not prove that the fragments of the coat had not got there at some other time. The laboratory evidence would have been valuable at the end of the case; it did not help him at the beginning.

Solved After All

The laboratory sometimes helps to write off "unsolved" mysteries. When Frank Everitt, a taxi-driver, was found murdered at Southwark, Chapman apparently failed to find the murderer. In fact, a man arrested and found guilty of a later murder was proved, to the satisfaction of the police, to have committed the Everitt crime. The police laboratory identified him *after* he had been arrested; it could not trace him before that.

It all comes back to the basic truth that detection, like genius, demands an infinite capacity for taking pains. The 40,000 fingerprints which Capstick took in the Blackburn case are matched by the series of identification parades held by Chapman at Blackpool, where a girl was found murdered in a shelter.

A man had been seen in the girl's company. He was an American soldier, coloured but not a Negro (he turned out in the end to be a Pueblo Indian). At one of the identification parades, Chapman had no fewer than 119 men who answered to that vague description. The murderer was not among them. He was ultimately spotted by the murdered woman's sister as Chapman and his men were driving out of the camp.

This element of chance recurs again and again. But it is only if the detective keeps continually on the job that he is able to seize the lucky moment. It is only if he sieves through every shred of evidence, both relevant and apparently irrelevant, that he can hope to get his man.

A famous example of this among recent Yard cases was the Luton Sack Murder, which Chapman investigated during the war. It was a refractory case from the outset. A woman's body was found in the river in a sack. All her clothes had been removed and for four months, despite wartime controls and identity cards, the body was not identified—and, indeed, never was until Chapman discovered the murderer.

The unidentified body presents the detective with his toughest proposition. If it is naked, he has not even the clothes to provide him with a starting point. Sometimes, as with Joan Woodhouse, who was found murdered near the grounds of Arundel Castle, complicated dental treatment in the past may lead to identification. But in the Luton case Chapman had nothing; not a clue.

Since the dead woman's clothes must have been disposed of in some way, and hoping they had not been burnt, Chapman set detectives to comb the town, knocking at doors to ask if the occupiers had bought or been given any second-hand clothes or fragments of clothes during the past months.

Among the items thus produced were the incomplete fragments of a woman's black coat. It had no maker's name, no indication of its owner. Chapman noticed that the shoddy padding was also black: which is not the natural colour of shoddy. He suspected the coat had been dyed, and examined it more closely until he found a laundry mark.

The mark was traced to a large firm of dyers, who reported that they had dyed the coat black for a woman living in Luton. They gave her address. Chapman called at the house and interviewed the woman's husband.

The husband said his wife was away from home, and pooh-poohed any suggestion from Chapman that she might have come to harm.

"You're wasting your time," he said. "She's in London, if you *must* know. She's written several times to her mother. I'll get the letters, if you like."

Chapman did like. The husband brought the letters, all rather uninformative, and all posted in Hampstead. Chapman read them and felt less satisfied than ever. He invited the husband to write at his dictation. He read over one of the letters to him. Then he compared the original letter with what the husband had written.

The writing was similar. In each there were identical errors of spelling, such as "surpose" for "suppose" and "Hamstead" for "Hampstead." The husband was still shrugging his shoulders and audibly wondering what all the fuss was about and why the police squandered the public's time and money in this way.

Chapman said, in the dead level tone which makes policemen's utterances so much more effective than the dramatic diction of their stage counterparts: "I am satisfied in my mind that you are the writer of both these documents."

The Lawyer Scoffed

Detectives really do use words like "documents" for letters, "informed" for told, "proceeded" for went. In one case, Chapman produced a confession, signed by the accused man, in which the word "proceeded" appeared three times. The defending counsel, trying to discredit the confession, made great play with this use of ponderous police terminology and pointed out that no ordinary citizen would say "proceeded" when he meant "went."

The accused man was then called to the witness box and, within the first half-dozen words of his evidence, had himself used "proceeded." Chapman beams more cherubically than ever each time he tells the story.

When not in a beaming mood, the somewhat Churchillian moon of Bill Chapman's face can be very severe. The blue eyes are cold, the lips thin. He prods the air with one finger of his left hand. At Luton, it took him only a short time to get a full confession of murder from the husband.

The point of the Luton story Chapman saves till the end. The black coat was *not* part of the woman's clothing when she was murdered. She had, in fact, discarded it some time before she was killed. It had been sent for salvage, but the salvage men had distributed pieces of it to various housewives for patching. It was completely irrelevant to the murder—yet it was the one clue which solved it.

Plus, of course, a detective's determination, patience and humdrum, dogged perseverance. And plus the poor impression he formed of the woman's husband the moment he set eyes on him.

It isn't the face; it isn't any one feature. Most usually, Chapman says, it is the way of walking which has that indefinable something that the detective recognizes in a criminal. But only the experienced detective can recognize it; and the experienced detective, says Chapman, is never one with less than fifteen years' experience. After twenty years he should be fairly mature.

GREEN GROW THE RUSHES

A New John Bull

What was this mystery of Anderida? Accustomed to holding their tongues, the marshmen gave no hint. To Meg, reporting the arrival of the Ministry investigators, it seemed time she found out

THE CAR CROSSED the canal and entered the Liberty of Anderida Marsh one morning early in April, three weeks before the storm.

There was no visible reaction. The girl on the switchboard in Portenoy continued to tug at her underlip and read a novel; the bells of St. John the Apostle's remained mute.

But Colonel Gill, the lords, the bailiff, the jurats and the commonalty of the Liberty were aware of the car's arrival. It was an official vehicle, and several hundred years of contact with His Majesty's Customs had made the marshmen sensitive to the advent of Government investigators.

There were three men in the car.

As it entered the Liberty, Colonel Gill

Meg froze into immobility. It was a boat—a boat moving silently through the rushes. She held her breath

Serial by HOWARD CLEWES

Colonel Gill was heated: "Farming isn't a matter of statistics!"

was interviewing the representative of the *Anderida Post* in the library of his large, rambling, red-brick mansion on the southern fringe of Portenoy.

"Let them come," he cried. "We're ready for them. I hold my land by Royal Charter of 1473. What was good enough for Edward IV is good enough for me. Print that."

He went to the window and stared gloomily across the flat green land beyond the trees. The girl reporter sat on a chair before the fire, notebook on her knee, and waited.

"*Quicumque habet terram in marisco . . .*" said Colonel Gill. "*. . . tenetur facere wallam contra mare.* Do you know what that means, young woman?"

The girl smiled non-committally, screwing up her eyes in the way she had.

"There's nothing to grin at," he said severely.

"I'm not grinning. It's just that my face——"

"Well, try and control your face, young woman."

He turned away to hide the answering grin on his own lips.

"Those words I've quoted. They mean that the men who own a bit of land by the sea are the people responsible for the sea wall. For the last five hundred years that's how the matter has stood. And it's entailed a devil of a lot of work, and money. The marsh farmers aren't beliyaching about it, but then we haven't noticed that the Government was particularly anxious to take it off our shoulders either. And because we came here when the country was malarial bog and worked like navvies to build the wall, we made the land, too, d'you see?"

"Yes, Colonel Gill," she said.

"Made it. Pinched it from the sea. Pushed the sea out inch by inch, and put up the wall to keep it out. Generations of fellows worked like slaves."

She nodded enthusiastically.

"And now the land is worth having," the colonel went on, "the Government's going to tell us how to farm it, is it? Don't think we're producing enough, don't they? Well, we'll deal with them."

"How, exactly?" asked the girl.

"Want me to give away my plan of campaign?"

"Well, no. . . ."

She liked Colonel Gill, though she remembered being terrified, when a child, by the rather bloodshot blue eyes, the military bluster that she knew he used as a veil.

"If I catch one of those Whitehall intruders this side of Burleigh Gutt," he said, "I'll run him in for trespass."

"Oh, what a wonderful story that would make," she said.

"Then that is what I shall most certainly do," he said, peering at her with a gently sardonic look.

"A hundred years ago," she said, "Government investigators were usually Customs officers, weren't they?"

"What have Customs officers got to do with it?"

"The smugglers used to bribe them," she said.

Colonel Gill eyed her narrowly. "Can't do that sort of thing nowadays, young lady. No smugglers now, in any case. All done with long ago—that sort of jinks."

"I think it's such a shame," she said, her candid brown eyes sparkling.

"One way of looking at it, I suppose."

He moved his wooden leg and it creaked loudly.

"Sorry," he said. "Doesn't upset you, does it?"

"Not a bit."

"Keep meaning to oil it," he said. "Always forget. Annoys some people, I expect. Awkward."

She laughed delightedly. He grinned.

"Amuses you, does it?"

"Well, the idea of oiling one's leg. . . ."

Thank God, he thought, for somebody who doesn't try politely to ignore it.

"You were saying," she said, "how the farmers were going to deal with the Ministry of Agriculture."

"We shall tackle them with their own weapons," he said. "Meet them fair and square and constitutional. It's enough. Anderida belongs by charter to the families that made it, and we won't submit to nosey-parkering from any damned Government. Good God alive, they'll be trying to nationalise the land next! We'll teach the beggars a lesson they won't forget."

He watched the fair head bent over the notebook. "What's the matter with your editor, Tom Cuffley?" he asked. "Why didn't he come and see for himself?"

"He's busy at the office, so he sent me."

"How do you get on with him, young woman?"

"Quite well. He's my father."

"Tom Cuffley your father? You're Meg, then."

"That's right. Young Meg."

"Grown up, haven't you? Put your hair up."

The colour coming into her face, she put her hand to the coil of fair hair across her head.

"How old are you now, Meg?"

"Nineteen."

He ran an eye over the well-set body, the long legs, the youthful breasts. There was a glow about her which was strangely affecting.

"Next thing you know, you'll be getting married," he said.

"Yes. I want to get married."

"In a year or two," he said. "Plenty of time."

"Why not now?"

"Why not?" he said. "Why not? It's a bit dull here, isn't it? Nothing much happens for you in Portenoy."

"Oh, yes, it does. Lots. What about the commission from the Ministry of Agriculture? That's news. Then I'm going to do a series on the history of Anderida, the corporation and the Cinque Ports. And then there's the smugglers. . . ."

"Ah, yes, the smugglers. Should make a lively story. I can't get about much—the leg, you know—but any time you're stuck for information, come and see me."

"Thank you, Colonel Gill."

The girl closed the notebook and stood up to go.

From the window he watched her climb on to her bicycle, eyeing with pleasure the cheerful see-saw of her hips as she pedalled away down the drive.

Meg had hardly left when the car came up the drive. It was long and black, like a hearse, with three suitcases roped to the roof.

Colonel Gill left the window and limped slowly back to the fire. Next minute his housekeeper tapped on the door.

"Three gentlemen to see you, sir. Mr. Finch, Mr. Fisherwick and Mr. Prudhoe."

"Show them in—and where's that can of oil? Must remember to oil my leg."

As the car approached the crest of the range of hills which, like a breaking wave, overtopped the canal and the boundary of the Liberty, Finch had leaned forward and tapped the driver's shoulder. The car drew up.

"From here," said Finch in a dry, incisive tone to his two companions, "we should get a useful bird's-eye view of our territory."

All three got out. Drawing the collars of their coats about their necks, they set off up the road towards the crest of the hill. The wind snatched at the tails of their black coats and bellied furiously in their trouser legs. They bowed their heads to it and clung to their hats as if mourners following an invisible coffin.

From the summit they looked down on the flat green land.

To the south, said Finch, pointing a tightly gloved hand, lay the marshes of Denge and Walland; in the far distance was the Dungeness lighthouse. To the north lay Romney Marsh, and beyond it the hills above Hythe shrugged a green shoulder to the clouds. Beneath them Anderida sprawled. The three men surveyed it closely.

"Forty-three thousand acres," Finch summed up bitterly, "of virtually nothing."

He narrowed his eyes at the brooding land. A few sheep dotted the fields; where the innumerable waterways met or the narrow roads converged, there were great dark houses peering from their pallisades of trees. The marsh slept.

Finch set his pince-nez firmly on his nose. "Well," he said, "we shall see. Let us return to the car."

They walked back down the hill.

Finch was a tall, pallid man with thin grey hair and a neat, round paunch beneath a flat, not to say almost concave, chest. It was not so much his physical appearance, however, that stamped him for those who knew him, as the air of joyless rectitude which he radiated.

Finch had a plump wife and two silent children, but one felt at once they were less a family than appendices to a summary of his career with the Ministry of Agriculture (Production and Statistics Department).

His recent appointment to the chair of the sub-commission for the investigation of backward areas was the reward of thirty-two years of impeccable service, and he intended that nothing should stand in the way of its success.

The situation in Anderida Marsh was outrageous, and, though he proposed to set it right as a matter of principle, his approach to those responsible — the farmers—was shot with a kind of impersonal vengefulness.

Back in the car, the three men were driven down the steep hill. The car crossed the canal by the bridge below the ruined abbey and entered the Liberty.

"Look at those fields," said Finch with asperity. He scowled out of the window. As far as the eye could see there was nothing but grass—grass and the dikes, the gullies, the culverts, the leaden arteries of the sleeping land.

"Why aren't they under the plough?"

At this leading question, Fisherwick winced. He was older than Finch—and gentler. Finch's impassioned identification of himself with the spirit of his job rather alarmed Fisherwick. A man should hold a corner of his heart in reserve, he thought, with which to live.

One might think politically, with an effort; one might even act politically sometimes; but to exist completely inside so narrow a frame—that was constitutionally beyond Fisherwick. Still, he understood its advantages and tried conscientiously to absorb something of Finch's philosophy; it must surely make the business of living a great deal easier. But did a fellow live that way?

Did Finch really live, wondered Fisherwick. The man appeared to draw his life from sheets of statistics, and within them built a house of anger and indignation, and made it his dwelling.

Finch was right, of course, in this case. The farmers of Anderida would find it hard to explain their inaction.

The car passed a dark, square Georgian mansion. Its windows, though black and sightless, seemed to watch their passing warily. Nothing stirred in the grounds.

"Do you know," Prudhoe said suddenly in his soft, high voice, "how they made the money to build such splendid houses for themselves?"

"No," said Fisherwick politely.

"Smuggling."

Prudhoe stared absently out of the window at the flowing fields. At forty-eight, he was the youngest of the three. He had an untidy sandy moustache and pale eyes, and wore his black hat pulled so far down on his head that the brim appeared to rest on his ears.

"Who's our contact, Finch?" he asked.

"A Colonel Gill."

"Gill . . . Gill." Prudhoe turned the name over in his mind. He had served during the war with the Intelligence Service. It had been his job to compile dossiers on the private lives of public figures. But it was not long before he

found it even more interesting to burrow into the secrets of officials wearing the same uniform as himself.

Soon he had something on nearly all the people he knew, friends and enemies alike, for everybody, Prudhoe discovered, had made a mistake at some time. He hungered to know about that mistake and did not rest till he had found it.

The end of the war made little difference; human weakness existed no less in peace than in war.

So Prudhoe continued to collect data on people. It pleased him to think he could scotch their promotions, their ambitions, even their careers, with a word in the right quarter.

"Do we know anything about Colonel Gill?" he asked.

Finch cleared his throat. "He is chairman of the corporation of the Liberty—an entirely illegal body, I may say."

"Illegal?"

"Not so much illegal," Finch corrected himself, "as without legality."

"What's the difference?" Prudhoe inquired with a trace of sarcasm.

"I should have thought it was clear enough, Prudhoe," said Finch. "The corporation of the Liberty does not exist in the eyes of the Government, that is all . . . another of those idiotic anachronisms which persist despite their own futility."

Portenoy, he added, had been one of the Cinque Ports. In return for its contribution in ships and men to the then British Navy, it had been blest by Royal Charter with certain civic privileges, such as freedom from taxation. These favours were granted on condition that the marshmen built and maintained the sea wall.

It was through the construction of the wall and the drainage of the marsh, Finch continued, that the corporation of the Liberty had come into being and been given recognition by Edward IV.

Removed, geographically and administratively, from the rest of the country, the marshmen had been allowed to develop their own system of government and election, and in the course of time had found themselves able to defy both the sheriff of the county of Kent and the Government at Westminster.

It was not till relatively recent times, Finch went on, that the immunity of the marsh had been questioned. Certainly, efforts had been made to curb the smuggling gangs on whose profits the entire population was said to live—Prudhoe's explanation of the large houses with which the marsh was dotted had been quite accurate, said Finch magnanimously.

Successive governments managed to divest the marshmen of their privileges one by one till now the corporation of the Liberty was no more than an anachronism. The corporation, repeated Finch, was, in fact, without legality.

"Then why," Prudhoe inquired softly, "are we going to see the chairman?"

"There's nobody else," Finch said testily.

"So the corporation still exists?"

"You can call it that if you like. A handful of sentimental old dugouts meet once a year and proceed to re-elect themselves to non-existent office."

"Have they no authority?"

"None. But we are approaching Colonel Gill because it seems he is frequently consulted by the farmers here."

"Has the corporation any revenue?"

"Rates, you mean? Certainly not."

"It all seems rather silly to me," said Prudhoe.

Fisherwick murmured: "I expect they get a lot of fun out of it, you know."

A quarter of a mile from the southern fringe of Portenoy town, the three men in the car sighted Colonel Gill's house. It was the size of a mansion, but really a farmhouse, backed by outhouses, stables, cowsheds, a barn.

An hour later, they were in conference with him. Colonel Gill was heated. "Yield? What's the matter with the yield?"

"Statistics," said Finch, "show that the yield per acre of land in the marsh is among the lowest in the country."

"Farming isn't a matter of statistics."

"Quite so, Colonel. Nevertheless, the Minister is not convinced that everything possible is being done. During the war——"

"It's precisely because the land was overworked during the war," the colonel broke in, "that we're giving it a rest now. Five years it needs to recover from the lambasting we gave it, five years as pasture. Come and see me again then."

"I am here to investigate now."

"And if the farmers won't play?"

"They will have to be re-orientated."

"You're going to need an Act of Parliament, Finch."

"Oh? What makes you think that?"

"There's no law which permits you to examine my books, my herd, my land, or even to question my farming policy. On the other hand, there are quite a few designed to prevent your doing so."

Finch eased himself an inch farther on to his chair. "Do I understand that you refuse to co-operate with us?"

"No, no. I said nothing of the sort. I was reminding you that I'm under no obligation to give you the run of my holding. If you want to have a look round, then I'll be happy to show you anything you'd like to see, as a personal favour." He smiled pleasantly.

Finch compressed his lips, aware that he had gained a point, if at the cost of a gratuitous insult.

"And the others," he inquired in tones somewhat muffled—"the rest of the farmers?"

"I can't answer for them. Depends on the individual. Some will play with you, I dare say; I can think of a few who won't. Very touchy about their rights, some of these chaps. Been here a long time, you know. They might appeal to the corporation. You don't want to get yourselves run in for trespass."

"Trespass!" said Finch, angrily. "Really, Colonel. We represent the Government. Trespass! And what corporation?"

"The corporation of the Liberty. Very ancient body."

"The corporation of the Liberty of Anderida Marsh, Colonel Gill, has no executive power and is no longer recognized by the State."

"In most respects," Colonel Gill said levelly, "that is true. But we still elect our own magistrates."

"Since when, pray?"

"Since 1473, to be precise."

Finch made a gesture of impatience. "That is one of the rights which remain to us," said the colonel. "That, our land, and the power to seize wrecks on the beaches. You must have a look at our charter some time."

He smiled genially at the three men, the one plainly irritated beyond endurance, the second faintly amused and even appreciative, the third watching him all the time with that oddly absent intensity.

"Colonel Gill," Finch began again, "my colleagues and I are interested only in the failure of the Marsh farmers to answer the Government's appeal for a greater yield per acre. I advise you in your own interests to co-operate."

The old man looked at his pipe.

"Is that some sort of threat, Finch?" he said.

"I won't answer for the Minister's attitude if the commission is hindered in its investigations, Colonel. I suggest you use your influence as chairman of the corporation to facilitate our work here."

"My dear fellow," said Colonel Gill, laughing, "you dismiss the corporation in one breath, and expect it to function on your behalf in the next. You can't have it both ways, you know."

"The corporation has no legal authority," said Finch stubbornly. "Nor of any other kind."

"Oh, you'd be surprised."

"I cannot recognize as official a body which no longer has the approval of the Government."

"Just as you please. It might have made your work a good deal easier."

"I shall manage very well, Colonel Gill."

"What you're afraid of," said Colonel Gill slowly, "is that recognition of the corporation would automatically entail admission of the rights of the marsh farmers to their land."

"And suppose that were so?"

"Then you'd be quite right to be afraid."

As they left the colonel's house, Finch delivered his verdict.

"Colonel Gill," he said, "is an old goat."

"On the contrary," said Prudhoe softly, "Colonel Gill is no fool at all."

And, in his study, the colonel decided that Prudhoe, with his pitiless stare, was the man to watch. A nasty customer, Prudhoe.

When Meg Cuffley told her father she had interviewed Colonel Gill, he raised his white head from the forme he was tapping and looked at her over the rim of his glasses.

"What's he say?"

"He says the farmers will fight."

"I bet they will," said Tom Cuffley cryptically. He peered at the forme.

"I think I'll see the sub-commission, too."

"Might be a good idea," he said. He began to tap again.

"It's going to be a lovely scrap," she said. "You're going to feature it, aren't you, Father?"

"We'll have to see. May not be worth it."

"Oh, but it's the biggest story in years," she said. She was puzzled. And she was uneasy. "You'll let me handle it, won't you?"

"As our star, and only, reporter, my dear, I give you a free hand with it. . . ." He cleared his throat and added, "Provided you'll come and shoot duck with me one morning."

She made a grimace. It was an old bargain. For years she had got what she wanted from him on that condition.

She laughed suddenly. "All right," she said. "Fair's fair."

She saw him smile.

"I'd better talk to some of the farmers, too," she said.

She looked at him reflectively. It was only recently, during the preceding year, that she had become aware of her own suspicions.

As a child, certainly, even as an excited girl in her middle teens, she had discerned some remote, unspoken hinterland of understanding among the people of the marsh; she had been unable to define it more clearly than as some unidentifiable sense of participation in a great secret, too distant, too elusive ever to be trapped.

She had thought, when she had troubled to consider it at all, that it probably had something to do with sex. But the "facts of life," which she accepted

Continued on page 20

"Leave that girl alone, you filthy swine! Take that! And THAT!"

THE HUMAN MACHINE

Heart's Desire

SOME years ago a physician wrote to a patient suffering from heart trouble. After many wise tips he said this:

"What your heart is asking for is that it should be permanently housed in a cheerful, placid man who will intelligently curb his physical, mental and emotional activities."

I think that is what all our hearts ask for—even the healthiest of them.

Now there are two ways of achieving a placid life. You can shut yourself away from the world and its worries, wrap yourself in a coat of selfishness and allow others to carry your burdens.

You can, on the other hand, bear your own burdens and share those of others, controlling your emotions and impulses, and trying always to hold the balance between what you want to do and what you know you ought to do.

Need I say which is the better way?

by ROFFE THOMPSON

RUSSIANS DISLIKE "OLD BOY" BUSINESS

by JANE UNWIN

Certainly it's better to swap goods with Russia than to swap blows, but differences in method make it difficult

Russian officer shows officials grains from S.S. *Baku*. It returned empty

THE RECENT HITCH in the Anglo-Soviet negotiations for a long-term trade agreement made some people ask: "If we can trade amicably with other countries, why not with the Russians?"

Exchanging goods should surely improve relations between our two countries besides being of material benefit to both. Yet it seems impossible to bring this about without some squabbling or hard feeling.

We have traded with the Russians before, and neither country has been completely happy with the results. We are trading with them now under an existing short-term agreement, and it is still a sour experience.

I remember the relief which greeted the signing of this short-term agreement in Moscow in December, 1947. After all the nattering around and under and over the Iron Curtain, we felt that we had at last made a genuine contact based on common interests. We wanted Russian grain; Russia wanted our machinery and manufactured goods. We had sensibly agreed to do business.

Harold Wilson, President of the Board of Trade, had bargained hard with Anastas Mikoyan, Head of Soviet Foreign Trade, but they had kept on friendly terms. Each recognized in the other a hard-headed businessman whose qualities could be respected.

The first Soviet grain ships sailed into a London dock one sunny afternoon the following February. The *Baku* was the first ship of her kind to come to Britain for ten years.

There was great excitement on deck. There were flowers, speeches, microphones. Above all, there was genuine pleasure among the Russians and the Londoners alike that a new trade agreement was getting off on the right foot.

Nuts and Bolts Were Missing

Captain Ivanov, the skipper of the *Baku*, had brought the first consignment of the 750,000 tons of grain which we were due to receive between February and September. He was looking forward to returning to Russia with the first consignment of the 25,000 tons of light rails which we had agreed to supply in return.

And that was where the misunderstandings began all over again. With the first load of Russian grain only just arrived, and the speeches and cheers filling the air, Captain Ivanov was worried about his return cargo.

"I'm going on to Bristol," he said, "but I understand that the cargo is not ready. When I left Odessa, our dockers told me not to come back without my cargo. We need your rails as much as you need our grain!"

Well, the rails were ready. But the accessories which went with them were not. There were no nuts, bolts and fish-plates to turn the individual rails into a railway line. Captain Ivanov went home without his cargo.

The happy atmosphere of the London docks was destroyed. The old bitterness began to return. What was the use of signing contracts if, as soon as the ink was dry on the paper, the whole thing became a fiasco?

Yet the true story behind all the mix-up was simple, unsinister, and reflected discredit on neither side.

It had not originally been our intention to ship our first consignment of rails to Russia in February. But when the Russians laid on Captain Ivanov's grain ship to bring us the first load they suggested that the ship might be used to bring back some of our rails. The Board of Trade set about collecting the rails from surplus stock ready for Ivanov's arrival.

While he was en route, it was discovered that not enough accessories would be available from current production to accompany the rails. The Russians were informed of this, and answered that the rails without the accessories were of no use to them.

The Ministry of Supply bustled around and got the accessories together. But by this time the Russians had made plans for Ivanov to pick up another cargo and did not want to put all their arrangements into reverse. So all this on-again off-again hustle produced only misunderstanding and bad feeling.

Someone Slipped Up

A few weeks later I was in Bristol. I saw another Soviet ship loading. Work was going with a swing. Truckloads of steel rails were lined up on the quayside. As one emptied, another slid smoothly into place. The Russian crew was pleased. The Soviet trade representative told me that he was well satisfied with the way the work was progressing.

So it was all the more pity that another small incident in Bristol should have hit the headlines. A group of well-wishers decided to visit the captain and crew of another Soviet ship in dock. Somebody slipped up in the arrangements.

When the group arrived with their flowers, they were met by a flustered junior officer who would not let them on board. The captain and first mate were ashore on business. No visitors had been expected. The young officer, who could not speak English, would not take the responsibility of conducting strangers over the ship in the captain's absence.

Naturally, things were straightened out. The captain invited the group to meet him later. There were smiles all round. But the damage had been done. Another molehill had become a mountain.

The present position is that the Russians have delivered all of the grain they promised. We have still to complete full delivery of the 25,000 tons of rails promised in return.

The agreement we signed with them also listed millions of pounds worth of machinery and other manufactured goods for which they would place contracts in England. The Russians claim that, because of high prices and uncertain delivery dates, they have been able to place only a little more than fifteen per cent of these contracts.

The implication is that the Russians are sticking to their side of the bargain; we are welshing on ours. But the facts are not as simple as that.

When Wilson and Mikoyan drew up their agreement in Moscow in December, 1947, they were dealing in two entirely different commodities. One was grain, which the Russians already had harvested and in their granaries, ready for shipment on the spot. The other was a certain amount of surplus stock which we had available for shipping (and are shipping) and a very much larger amount of manufactured goods which we had not even begun to make.

It was apparent to our people that production and cost of machinery (which, as specified in the agreement, would be delivered over periods ranging up to three years from the placing of the contracts) would be governed by varying factors of availability of materials and labour.

Nor could the Russians be unaware of this, since they already had an enormous trade delegation over here.

The Russians claim that their purchases of machinery and equipment in Britain under the agreement do not balance their exports of grain to us, which is valued at £23,000,000. Our answer to this is that, though the Russians concluded deals for only some £3,000,000 worth of machinery and equipment under the agreement, they have spent £23,000,000 on raw materials from us alone and in addition have signed contracts estimated at £15,000,000 for manufactured goods outside the provisions of the agreement.

Trouble Over Delivery Dates

Another snag in our trade relations is the Russian demand that we should guarantee deliveries on set dates. In the December, 1947, discussions the Russians accepted reluctantly that the British Government could not guarantee delivery by private firms. The Russians accepted this—but they were not convinced. They are still not convinced.

The Board of Trade has done much to smooth the way for Anglo-Russian trade. It has persuaded many manufacturers to trade with the Russians when they didn't want to.

The Russian market is not, for the independent producer, as certain a long-term investment as many others. The Russians, who stick to the letter of their agreements and never conduct business on an "old boy" basis, are not easy to work for. After the centuries of mutual suspicion and more recent events, there is no reason why we should expect their attitude to be different.

But for the Board of Trade to attempt to coerce manufacturers into giving priorities to any one customer would mean the eventual weakening of all our trade connections. No other customer would be willing to deal with a firm which already had a more-favoured customer.

So we may again have to say "no" to the Russians in the near future. But that is no reason why negotiations as a whole should fall down. Despite the dashing of hopes over a long-term trade agreement, we are still trying to make an interim agreement for the immediate purchase of Russian grain as part of our 1949 grain buying programme.

Contracts That They Suspect

It needs only one glance at the daily headlines to show why we must make every effort to keep the trade going. Swapping produce is one of the surest methods of avoiding swapping blows. And both countries are equally in need of each other's produce.

The Russians are certainly difficult to get on with. So are the Americans, on occasion. So are all the other countries we deal with. The difference is that we are suspicious of the Russians, but not of the others. And the Russians are suspicious of almost everybody.

Give the Russian a hard-and-fast agreement and he will stick to it, as he has over his grain deliveries. Give him a contract with a "best endeavour" clause and he will immediately cudgel his mind to find out in what way he is being cheated, as he has done over the deliveries of rails and machinery.

He will protest because he thinks somebody is trying to out-smart him. We will protest because we think his objections are an attempt to out-smart us.

Yet there is so much at stake, not only in terms of material improvement but of peace itself, that we *must* make a firm effort to understand the Russians and build up a solid exchange of trade. Then we can reasonably demand that the Russians should try to understand us.

It's one of the strange things about this country: whatever you are or do or look like, once you start speaking you reveal yourself . . .

OUT OF

Eleven-year-old Cynthia Simpson chooses her vowels carefully at Aida Foster elocution class. For the young, mastery of Standard English may prove a better passport to success than the school certificate

WE SHALL NEVER know how many cases there are like the production manager I heard of recently. He travelled a hundred miles for an interview; he seemed just perfect for the job of supervising a new factory; and he was a baffled man when he didn't get it.

He was efficient. Behind him was a grand record of rocketing output. What made this affair worse for him was that the other three candidates had obviously less experience than he had. What they all did have, said he coldly, was lovely Oxford accents.

Now we shall never know—but could this man have lost a job because of his own home-spun accent?

It doesn't seem very likely: unless you remember that a general manager these days must be forever meeting important people. He must be able to make the right impression in quarters where dialects stamp a man as lacking in background.

Is it possible that the directors in the case I have quoted preferred a less able man with more polish about him? Do people like that production manager really suffer because of their speech?

We can only guess—for this queer business of speech and accents is a closed book. Millions feel it, and resent it, and let themselves be ruled by it; but not many realize how deep and wide its power is.

Everybody thinks well of the man who speaks better than himself. A beggar at the door with a good accent—and you wonder how he fell to this. An M.P. on the air with a broad accent—and you wonder how he rose to it. You know the speech isn't "right," either way.

Difference That Persists

Speech is the last remaining rampart of class in Britain. And it's unassailable. You can't tax it down. You can't level it by statute.

We have ourselves to blame. We've accepted it. We're all agreed a man who speaks with a local accent must prove himself in some *other* way before we respect him. (Is there anything more damaging or patronizing than calling him a rough diamond?) But people with the right speech open their mouths, and they are respected.

What is this way of speaking that smiles down on the Yorkshire, Lancashire, Midland, Tyneside, Welsh and all the rest of our ancient dialects? But notice that the Scottish accent does not yield to it: we think none the less of a man speaking Scots.

Well, this favoured speech is now termed Standard English; and since broadcasting began we may all hear it, every day, in our own homes. Don't call it the Oxford accent. The Oxford accent is an affectation. This isn't.

Standard English has developed over the last century, but only in the last thirty years has it been examined, classified, and *fixed*. Phonologists took recordings of words as spoken in such places as Army officers' messes, public schools, the churches, the West End stage; and from it all Standard English has been settled.

The B.B.C. Committee on Spoken English, a panel of world-famous experts, were the high priests of Standard English until 1940. Now part of the committee's job has been taken over by the B.B.C. Pronunciation Unit.

This, then, is the speech—based on

YOUR OWN MOUTH

by R. C. SHAW

. . . But there is a standard English, and that doesn't mean la-di-da speech

social background—which every part of the country now accepts as being the best. All others are now dialects. So the obvious thing is for all ambitious rough diamonds to learn Standard English. That's not so easy.

Listen to the news-readers as hard as you like, but can you say *how* your speech is different? (if it is!) For every rough diamond there are a thousand half-polished diamonds who are disconcerted when they go far from home and strangers say "How's Manchester?" or "You're from Bristol, aren't you?" For all these people, imitation is even more difficult.

Take the Word "Came"

No books can help. These are *sounds*, and sounds cannot be printed. Books on speech training will explain your throat, and what to do with your teeth and tongue, but without a teacher you can't get far.

You have a pronouncing dictionary? Let's look at it. Look for "*cake*" or "*tray*" or "*same*." Now most likely your dictionary says cāk or cāk or cak. When you glance at the foot of the page to see what that means, you see "as in *came*." But it can't tell you how to say "*came*."

If you're Lancs or Yorks you may say something like "cairm" (like the sound in *aeroplane*). A Cockney would say "cime." The south-west says almost "coime." The Geordie has a special, private sound shared only by the Welsh: it's the same as in French words like *ete*.

The Standard English sound is quite different. It's *e-e-y-m*. Listen to any news-reader saying United *Nat*ions or *flames* or *today*; and you may agree. Perhaps you knew!

Only one dictionary has been able to go into the matter fully. This is by Professor H. C. Wyld (he and Professor Daniel Jones are the pioneers of Standard English) and Dr. Wyld does it by phonetics, which are international symbols of sound, and which take some learning.

Even if you speak Standard English yourself you may like to know how dialects differ.

What about all the *o*-sounds? How do you say "road"? If you rhyme it with "sword" you're from north of the Midlands, south of the River Tees (or Wear). Or is it "rowd," something like *allowed*? That would be Cockney. Birmingham people can go better than this: they manage "rair-owd." Again, something between "rawd" and "rowd," well strung out, will always be heard west of the London—Severn line.

Standard English says "rer-wd" with the first part rhyming with *her*. Affected speakers lengthen the first part.

The third big divider (after "came" and "road" sounds) is the *u*-words, as in butter and put. Do you make the same noise for both? The B.B.C. doesn't.

Certain words—put, pull, butcher, full—are said poot, pool, bootcher, fool. For the other words, it should be almost like the north-country *a*-sound: so that butter, but, hut, cut, mutter, are *almost* pronounced like batter, bat, hat, and so on.

Perhaps you've heard the very untrue tale of the poor comedian at the audition who said: "Can I use my patter now?" and the radio producer said: "Your patter? You can't play golf here at all!"

North's All-purpose Sound

I've hardly time to mention *a*—the long a or the flat a or the back a or the low a, as novelists love to call it, as if we knew what they meant. For the northern half of Britain, one *a* is enough: it does for fat, faster, hat, cast—everything. But Standard English has two sounds. It says farster, carst, larst, larfter; and for words like hat, chatter, rat, it has a sound halfway between north-country *a* and *e*.

It can do miracles with this noise: listen to some announcers announcing somebody's *darnce-bair-and*!

Now if we know what Standard English is, and where the dialects go wrong, can it be made available to people who would like to speak it?

Of course, anyone trying it out must risk being called a snob, an upstart, a swanker—because speech makes such an instantaneous impression.

One way is to send your son to a public school; then hope to catch it from him.

The universities have little interest in this problem—if it is a problem. Some of them do research work in dialects, using recording apparatus like that in the film *Pygmalion*, but this has no practical application.

Radio is having little effect in lowering the barrier of speech, no matter how loudly the dialect enthusiasts wail. Do the people in your district speak any less broadly than their fathers did? The most the B.B.C. does is to provide a very fine background of excellent speech which we could imitate if we felt like it.

Shouldn't Rub It In

What *could* be done is a little less rubbing-in of the class distinction of speech. You must have read those authors who laboriously try to give you the speech of a Cockney servant or a Manchester plumber. Some make themselves ridiculous; like the novelist whose policeman says to the private detective: "Aha, I thort it was you, sir——" Is there any other way to say *thought*?

On the stage and films, the lower classes are never allowed to be Standard English: though, praise be, the adenoidal maid seems to be very gradually fading away.

The vagaries of the B.B.C. are more serious because they reach every home. Listen to the radio plays: servants and workmen are always dialectal on the air. Nor is it easy to forget the hundreds of wartime features in which *every* officer was Standard English, and *every* man and n.c.o. was Tyneside or Midlands or Cockney. Hardly a true picture!

The answer may be that most servants *are* dialectal, and most people who employ them aren't. Most, perhaps. Not all. Many a servant speaks better than her mistress. But in all our entertainment, it's not most. It's all. Is that not rubbing it in?

At the other end of the scale there are the comic affectations we hear now and then (though rarely on the radio)—the "Ai don't mind if Ai do——"; the fud, cuk, buk, instead of food, cook, book.

Ignore the sentimentalists who yearn for more dialect speaking. Dialects are healthy enough, thank you; but they never yet helped a man or woman who wants to get on. It's no good trying to dismiss Standard English with a sneer about Oxford accents. It's a good, steady, hard-wearing speech, respected in every corner of the Empire; and if it won't help you to the top every time, at least it won't hold you back.

At present the schools can do little about all this. A lot of teachers speak well, but they're not conscious of Standard English. They give lessons on speech-training but it's always an insistence on *clear* speech, with a silly worry about the endings of words, and sometimes an even sillier effort to say words as they are spelt.

But a campaign might be started to show teachers that Standard English could often do far more for boys and girls than a school certificate can. The Ministry of Education could begin courses, too, in the teachers' training colleges, so that teachers might in time speak as well as the clergy.

Can Speak Both Ways

I believe this might get results because of the astonishing work that is being done, in some towns, with children's theatres, where boys and girls are being thoroughly groomed in Standard English.

Who cares if they yell dialect in the streets? It's a great thing if they know two speeches. If they're bi-lingual and have an idea when to use one speech or the other, they'll learn fast enough how Standard English will help them.

Yes. Against the ancient barriers of speech in Britain, I'd pin my hopes in children like the twelve-year old boy who (I'm told) flopped down after his exquisite performance in a Lancashire school theatre, and said: "*Best shaw Aa bin in in arl me life! But we maunt stair 'ere, tha knows. She ses we gotta gaw 'awm!*"

From all-revealing mouth come three versions of "out." Here it's Standard

Here it's Cockney. Out of the mouth's corner issues "aout"—almost "art"

And here's a northern version—a low, rather gruff sound like "oat"

John May ("chilly on top") recommends nightcap as sleeping aid

Mrs. Shard: "I cannot forget Germany"

FREE SPEECH

THE OTHER DAY I NOTICED a large lump of coal fall from a coal wagon. I drew the coalman's attention to it, but he disregarded it and went on his way—and the person who got that bag of coal was one large lump short.

If coalmen treat weights and measures so casually what guarantee has the consumer that he gets what he pays for? Coal is such a valuable product today that it should be handled with greater care.—C. HILL, 10 Pendine Road, Ely, Cardiff.

Security at Seventy

REACHING MY SEVENTIETH birthday this week, I had the satisfaction of drawing £2 2s. old age pension for my wife and myself.

It gave me a feeling of security that I have not known for many years. The increased pension, together with what we have saved, will allow us to live in comparative comfort. I feel deeply grateful to those who have brought this about.—E. J., Holywell, Flints. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Nautical Language?

I READ RECENTLY THAT a Danish scientist has satisfied himself that fish have the power of hearing. He removed the eyes of four fish and got them to seek their food by blowing a whistle. Now he is trying to find out if they can speak.

I hope he is successful and that the fish are sufficiently articulate to express their opinion regarding the removal of their eyes.—H. CRICHTON GLASS, 34 Hutcheson Square, Glasgow, C.5.

Wants to Go on Teaching

AFTER FORTY YEARS of teaching, as head teacher, assistant teacher and as education officer, I am now a compulsorily retired, superannuated schoolmaster. Until recently I was a War Office tutor to prospective teachers in educational psychology.

I am only too anxious to go on teaching. I am fit and active, mentally as well as physically, yet education officers repeatedly turn down my applications for employment in the profession now experiencing such shortage of staff, and which I know so well. Why a uniform retiring age of sixty-five for teachers, but not for doctors, clergymen, lawyers and Members of Parliament?—A. C. BIRCH, 124 Albacore Crescent, London, S.E.13.

Goodwill

ONE OF THE MOST APPALLING examples of bad taste I have seen for a long time is the Christmas card sold in Berlin and sent out by Control Commission officials and others.

Headed "Nowell," the card bore a cartoon showing stacks of cardboard boxes marked "Middle East Pest Farms" named after various Russian cities, such as Odessa. A Russian soldier and a civilian are shown planning to drop mosquitoes from the boxes over the Western sector of Berlin.

The card that I received was sent out by a public relations officer in the Control Commission. If there are many instances like this, it looks as if public relations will be even more strained than they are at present.—F. J. LORD, 61 Empingham Road, Stamford, Lincs.

Now We Know

ONE OF YOUR CORRESPONDENTS after a three-months visit to the U.S.A. found Americans "impetuous, zestful, over-enthusiastic, naïve and immature" (JOHN BULL, November 20).

This may be true: America is essentially a pioneering country of individualists.

Enjoying life, its people work hard and play hard. They are not afraid to express themselves. In comparison, an Englishman is dull, hopelessly hamstrung by convention.

Each nation has its faults, but I'd rather be without a dime in this wonderful, crazy, cheerful country than a millionaire in cold, apathetic England.—STAN SMITH, Orange Coast College, Box 307, Costa Mesa, California, U.S.A.

"Sadism" at the Circus?

RICHARD COLLIER, WHO WROTE "You Can't Trust Tigers" (JOHN BULL, December 25), must be gullible indeed if he believes kindness plays any part in persuading lions and tigers to "perform."

Wild animals cannot be "tamed" without the infliction of cruelty, and people who can find enjoyment in this type of entertainment are either morons or sadists and not (as they so fondly imagine) just Great Big Children.—GERTRUDE NIELSON, Woodside, Barrhead, near Glasgow.

World Citizen No. 1

WHILE IN PARIS RECENTLY I met Garry Davis, subject of the leader, "World Citizen No. 1" (JOHN BULL, December 25), and found him a very unassuming and sincere young man. He is now supported by the "Front Humain," which is actively working for World Government together with seventeen other national organizations.

JOHN BULL'S leader stated: "For every man and woman who now supports Garry Davis, there must be millions more who would join his world peace crusade if they thought it had the slightest chance of succeeding." We believe there is that chance.

A hundred M.P.s and many distinguished people outside Parliament, such as Sir John Boyd Orr, support this organization in its aims.—JEAN O'DONNELL, Crusade for World Government, 44 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

A German Wife Replies

I ADMIRE "TEENAGER," who wrote to you saying that she was ashamed of her parents, who would not allow her to send cast-off clothing to German children on the grounds that they were former enemies.

I am a German girl married to an Englishman. I have been here a year and am very happy, but I still cannot forget Germany as it was when I left. One cannot blame the children for what happened in the war. Many of them, like my own kid sister, were born either just before or during the war. They are grateful for anything.

I am working and saving hard to get my sister over here for a holiday to let her forget for a short time that there was a war. Hate cannot rule for ever.—MRS. D. SHARD, 56 Highfield Road, Romford, Essex.

Leaders Were Children Once

"TEENAGER" suggests that it was the parents who were responsible for the last war and not the children. Let it not be forgotten that many of the fanatics who caused so much misery *were* mere children after the first World War who *got* the sympathy "Teenager" asks for.—A. CAMPBELL, 9 Ford Street, Swindon, Wilts.

Red Tape in the Garage

I SYMPATHIZE WITH F. Snape, who described (JOHN BULL, January 1) all the form-filling red tape that was necessary before he could erect a cabin.

I am having the same trouble with a temporary garage, fourteen feet by eight feet. The council has passed my plans, but I am now told that the Land Development Board requires a fee of £35 before I can erect it. As the garage itself only cost £44 I think this is ludicrous, and I am fighting the case.—CECIL HAIGH, 43 Hornby Street, Barnsley.

Chilly on Top

THE ARTICLE "Does Sleep Pass You By?" by Harvey Graham, M.D. (JOHN BULL, January 1), omitted to mention the use of a nightcap (woolly, not wet) as an important aid to sleep.

I am bald, and without a nightcap the top of my head becomes icy cold and I cannot sleep. My chilly top is hereditary. My mother and father wore nightcaps for the same reason.

My nightcap is not tight, but it stays on without trouble all night. With a practised twist of the head against the pillow I can adjust it to cover either ear or both eyes at will.—JOHN MAY, Bovinger Lodge, Ongar, Essex.

So Tired

I WISH SLEEP *would* pass me by. My trouble is keeping awake. I have tried varying my hours of sleeping and all the known methods of cushion positioning and body posture, but no sooner do I sit down during the day than I fall asleep.

Travelling on buses and trains terrifies me; so do restaurants—lest I wake up with my head in the soup. I am twenty and, apart from this affliction, healthy. — MISS H. R., Kettering. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Because of space shortage only a limited selection of the many readers' letters submitted can be printed. If your views are squeezed out, it does not mean that they have been overlooked by the Editor. For every letter used, John Bull pays one guinea. Letters should be marked "Free Speech" and carry the full name and address of sender for publication.

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM

THUMBS DOWN ON ALL-IN

Wrestling has come clean. You mustn't bend back an opponent's finger; you *may* bend back all four • *by* STANLEY RUSSELL

Assirati (nearest camera) puts on wrist lock. He says he never deliberately grimaces for effect

CLEANED UP AND streamlined, wrestling is enjoying a boom that threatens to knock boxing, especially in the suburban and provincial centres. The crowds know they will see either a long-drawn-out struggle for supremacy or a quick, spectacular end. Generally a round lasts ten minutes or until the first fall —one man being pinned by both shoulders for three seconds.

So Belle Vue, Manchester, is packing in 7,000 at every performance; St. James's Hall, Newcastle, gets 4,000 a time; and a firm of London promoters claims to be putting on fifteen shows a week. A score of local councils have so far given postwar wrestling their blessing —by letting promoters use their public halls.

A change of name seems the main cause of this change of heart. Take away the "all-in" label of ill-repute and you have pure wrestling—or at least a thumping good, solid, down-on-the-mat style of entertainment. A poster announcing "wrestling" or even "free-style wrestling" draws the crowds. But call it "all-in wrestling" and the show flops.

One promoter recently staged an "all-in" programme near London and attracted 150 spectators. Two nights later a rival who put on a plain "wrestling" bill half a mile up the road shut the doors with 2,000 inside and had to turn away hundreds more.

Matter of Opinion

Obviously, wrestling, in one guise or other, is "cleaning up" a big new market, with the game cleaned up, too. The cleaning-up of the game is a trifle vague and mainly a matter of opinion. Promoters say prewar wrestlers who were no credit to the sport have gone; wrestlers say the bad promoters have faded away.

Maybe both are right. There are many new promoters and new wrestlers. But many of the old-timers remain.

Above all the arguments, reigning as supreme and apparently as imperturbable as he was ten years ago, is Bert Assirati, seventeen-stone Islington man, who has been undisputed British heavyweight champion since 1942 and claimant to the title for half a dozen years before that.

Bert is entering his twentieth year in the wrestling business. He has seen it through the good times and bad. Other wrestlers and the promoters agree, seemingly proud of the reflected glory, that he is "absolutely unbeatable in this country." None of them, it seems, can recall an Assirati defeat in Britain for sixteen years or more—in Britain, mark you. The record slipped slightly in Paris recently, where he lost the verdict to a hero named Ivor Martinsen.

Assirati's appearance in the ring makes a novice spectator wonder how any other human being could stand up to him—or want to. For all his seventeen-stone weight he is short, about 5 ft. 6 in. His hands look shorter and stubbier than normal because of their twice-life-size thickness. His neck is approximately the size of a New Look waist, and the rest of him is in proportion.

His face has a natural mobility of expression. In the old days some wrestlers used to practise making grimaces as part of their "style"; Assirati says he has never done so—probably doesn't realize that doing what comes naturally is better than any amount of practice-pulled faces.

His advance to world fame is due mainly to the cutting out of the elementary mistakes of his early days, chief of which was that he used to wait to see what the other fellow was going to do, and found out too late.

A sense of anticipation, imagination and intelligence are the main essentials. Brute strength is not such an asset after all.

Though you must not deliberately break your opponent's limbs you may, as a professional, use dangerous holds that are barred to amateurs. You must not bend back a single finger, which would break easily, but you may try to bend all four together. There are so many styles that there is virtually no style. Within the broad limits of "no mayhem" a professional can try almost anything he likes.

Assirati sums it up: "Every wrestler takes the cream of all the styles and moulds them to his individual requirements."

When he was working his way up the bills, wrestling had a bad name because of frequent brawls. A bucket of water might be emptied over the nearest spectators by a wrestler. The referee might be slung out of the ring. A loser might fling his water bottle at a corner post and scatter broken glass over the ring and the customers.

Gangs Got to Work

These tantrums, says Assirati, were not staged by "the boys." Some promoters were to blame. Promoters had set areas, and apparently a form of gangsterdom sometimes grew up. Rival territories were often invaded, and if a promoter wanted to get a rival closed down he might bribe a wrestler to smash the show up. Some sections of the British public loved it, but these antics earned the game its bad name.

Now only the pure in heart can continue. "The boys" have got together and discovered that if a show is closed it means that much less employment for all of them. So wrestling has advanced from the status of a common brawl to something of an art.

It is, in fact, developed from the art of physical culture. Ordinary gymnastic exercises are followed by a course with the dumb-bells, and then, inevitably, weightlifting. Every wrestler, amateur or professional, has been a weightlifter. Progression is natural: after lifting four or five hundredweight of deadweight steel, a couple of hundredweight of humanity is comparatively easy to throw around.

"We don't earn so much as boxers for a contest," says Assirati. "Twenty pounds is a big fee, but normally a good wrestler can have two or three bouts a week, and his career lasts at least fifteen years—much longer than in boxing."

Wrestlers collect many honourable scars as personal souvenirs of their endeavours. One of Assirati's worst is at the base of his forefinger. The gentleman opposing him so far forgot his ring manners as to bite him. Assirati spent some time in hospital until the wound healed. He bears no grudge: "Accidents happen occasionally, but it stands to reason we're not going to hurt each other deliberately. With our knowledge of anatomy any of us could easily wreck the career of a man who did not fight clean," he says significantly.

He is emphatic that results are not faked, though he admits that sometimes a bout is dressed up to give the spectators a little more excitement.

"What's wrong with that?" he asks. "Suppose I'm to wrestle with you. Everybody knows I'm bound to win. I could throw you at the start, as soon as we come out; the referee counts 'one, two, three,' the round is over, and the public complains it hasn't had it's money's worth.

"But if we wrestle for a while before I pin you no harm is done. The better man wins, and the public has seen more for its money."

Deceptive to Watch

He thinks the public is deceived because feinting is cleverer and less obvious than in a boxing match, which, he points out, can also be "extended" at will to lengthen a programme. "We may be going through the motions of wrestling, though probably I'm only leaning on you. But you'll be puffing hard at the end of a ten-minute round if you've had seventeen stone pressing against you all that time."

He insists that in the end it is always the better man who wins. "I've been champion all these years. If the boys had helped me to win my title, don't you think they would have demanded long ago that it was time someone else had a turn?"

So Bert Assirati sleeps soundly with a clear conscience. "I keep to a regular routine, and lead the normal uneventful life of a happily-married man," he says. "Nothing exciting ever happens to me."

King Cobra

by ANTHONY FENWICK

ILLUSTRATED BY NASH

Everywhere he went he was seeing snakes—and it wasn't from drinking. Something else, deadly and uncanny, was at work

IT WAS A LOVELY DAY. As the three men climbed steadily up the slippery grass slope, they felt the air cool and sweet in their faces, the light breeze coming gently through the trees on either side of the track.

Bright flowers of flame o' the forest stood out sharply against the milky blue sky, looking as if they had been cut out of scarlet paper and then stuck emphatically on the smooth, grey bark.

The weather was always cool and pleasant in the little state set high up among the hills where India, China and Burma ran together. Sometimes it rained softly, but it was never sticky hot as it was in the plains far to the south.

In the plateau, surrounded by bare and savage rocks climbing into the distance, everything was bright and clean. Gaily coloured birds flashed among the trees; in the villages the tribesmen decked themselves with flowers.

First in the little procession was Yusuf, the interpreter. A Bengali from Calcutta, he had come to the hills to trade many years ago, probably finding his native city too hot to hold him. Married to a local girl, he had settled in the hill country and prospered.

When the maharajah decided to employ a European firm to make a motor road from the capital to the railhead fifty miles away, Yusuf was the obvious choice as liaison officer between the contractors and the native labour. He spoke English and Urdu, as well as the curious chattering local tongue. He had a great sense of the importance of his position and walked in a deliberate, flat-footed way, his large stomach thrust pompously forward.

Next came Mayer, the construction boss. Nobody knew much about Mayer except that he was a superb engineer with an astonishing genius for improvisation. There was no doubt that he was a German by birth, although nobody had ever heard him speak anything but English or Urdu. He had been in India for thirty years and was hated bitterly wherever he went.

When there was work to be done, Mayer drove everybody, including himself, without mercy. He had no hesitation in using his great fists to emphasize his wishes, and two white seams in his hairy, tree-like body showed where past victims had tried to work off grudges.

Arms swinging loosely at his sides, shaggy bull's head lowered, he stumped stolidly up the hill.

LAST of the three was Webb, a tall, grey-eyed Australian, with loose, strong limbs and a ready smile. His face was tanned to the colour of teak, and wrinkles ran from the corners of his eyes as he squinted upwards into the sun. He was Mayer's assistant and detested the man, only staying with him out of respect for his competence.

Webb knew he was going to hate the next half hour; he also knew that there was nothing he could do about it with Mayer in charge.

They reached the top of the little hillock and stood there breathing deeply as they looked round at the handful of mud-and-thatch huts scattered about the flat summit. They were all neatly and beautifully built, with level verandas of mud made smooth by generations of bare feet.

There was nobody in sight except one naked infant, who stared at them, fingers crammed into his mouth, for a moment, and then fled behind one of the huts, squealing like a bat.

After a comprehensive look from his slightly protuberant pale blue eyes, Mayer turned to Yusuf.

"Excellent," he said. "This is just what I need. These huts are well built and will do for stores as well as a camp for the labourers. Find one of these people and tell them they have twenty-four hours to leave. If they argue, say that the maharajah has given us powers to requisition any buildings we require. Tell them I shall use force if they make it necessary."

Yusuf bowed and walked away into the village.

MAYER and Webb looked around curiously, Mayer whistling tunelessly through his teeth. The village was scrupulously clean and tidy, each hut having a neat plot of turned earth in front of it, in which grew a carefully tended flowering shrub. The heavy wooden cross-beams holding the thatched roofs were carved and ornamented. Clumps of feathery young bamboo waved gentle fingers against the sky.

"Bit hard on these chaps. Looks like they've lived here a long time." Webb spoke with the slow drawl of the Queenslander.

"Ach! Animals. What do they matter?"

Webb looked at Mayer curiously. "Human bein's, ain't they? You can't treat them like animals."

"Do not be a sentimental fool, I beg you."

An uncomfortable silence fell, lasting until Yusuf returned with a stocky little brown man whose face was blank with despair at the disaster which had overtaken him.

"This is the headman," said Yusuf, "he is making difficulties."

The little man cast himself down at Mayer's feet, clasping him round the legs, and talking wildly in a high, desperate voice. Mayer moved backwards, disengaging himself without gentleness from the man's grasping hands.

"What is all this about?" he asked in a bored voice.

"He is saying that this is a holy village of some sort and that his people have been here many years. He begs that you will take a few huts only and allow the rest of the people to stay."

"Quite impossible. I need all the huts."

Yusuf turned to the headman, who was squatting disconsolately on his heels. After hearing the translation of Mayer's decision he got slowly to his feet, his face now like stone.

With quiet dignity he spoke a few more words. Yusuf asked a question, but the man remained silent. Yusuf shrugged and turned to Mayer.

"Sir, he says that one hut at least must remain untouched. It is the residence of a very holy person who must not be moved." Yusuf giggled suddenly. "I have asked him who this holy person is. Apparently he has no name—he is simply referred to as the Man."

"Rubbish. All must leave," said Mayer curtly.

Yusuf spoke again to the headman, who muttered something in reply, staring at the ground.

"These are very ignorant and superstitious people, sir. He says that he dares not tell the Man, but that you must do so."

Mayer shook his head impatiently. "Very well. Let us go at once and settle this business. It is taking too long."

As they made their way to the centre of the village the people came out of the huts and followed them silently. The procession stopped in front of a large hut and the headman went hesitantly into the dark doorway.

Webb looked at the hut. There was only one carving on the roof beam, a crudely ferocious piece of work representing a striking cobra. What it lacked in finish it made up for in vivid portrayal of violent action.

The headman came out and spread a brightly coloured native blanket on the smooth level clay in front of the door. Then he stepped back and stood waiting. There was a hiss of indrawn breath from the crowd as a man came through the doorway.

He was tall and slim, dressed only in a white cloth tucked about his waist. His head and body were quite hairless and his skin appeared to ripple and undulate as he moved, without wrinkle or crease.

Webb saw that his eyes were not the usual Asiatic soft brown colour but dead black. They had a strange dull sheen, like dusty glass. His stare was quite unwinking.

Without looking away from Mayer for an instant he spoke, slowly and sibilantly, with no trace of emotion.

YUSUF frowned as he listened, and half hesitated before he started to translate to Mayer.

"Sir, this is the person they call the Man. He is evidently greatly feared, but I cannot discover why. He does not exactly refuse to leave but says it is not possible because of the——" Yusuf hesitated, searching for a word, "——the Mysteries."

"Ridiculous. He will leave with the rest." Mayer swung on his heel to walk away.

As he did so the Man reached out and laid a hand on his arm. Scarlet with fury, Mayer turned and struck him a backhand blow in the face. There was an indescribable sound from the crowd, halfway between a gasp and a snarl. Webb slipped his hand under his bush jacket, feeling for the heavy automatic pistol slung over his shoulder.

The Man made a small gesture, and the crowd fell silent again. He had neither staggered nor winced under the blow. His breath made a tiny hissing noise through his teeth as he looked at Mayer, then he turned and went back into the hut. Webb shook his head and followed Mayer down the slope, Yusuf staying to impress his authority with the villagers.

The headquarters camp was set on a tiny hillock overlooking a stretch of paddy field, about a quarter of a mile from the village.

Mayer and Webb lived in thatched huts recently built on the site, and a larger one was used as office and map room. The two white men took their meals in the open, a table being set up under a corrugated iron roof.

When they got back from the village, lunch was ready; after the meal, during which they hardly spoke, they each went to the living-huts for half an hour's rest before continuing work.

Webb was lying on his camp bed reading a letter when he was roused by a shout, followed by a shot. Scrambling to his feet he ran, gun in hand, to the other hut, where he found Mayer leaning tensely forward, staring into the corner of the hut.

"What is it?"

"A snake—a big one. *Himmelherrgott,* it was on my chair—I nearly sat on it."

WEBB looked at Mayer curiously. The man was shaking and sweating, and he had never been heard to use a German word before. He turned and saw Webb's stare.

"I hate the filthy things." He grinned uneasily. "In all my time in this country I have never become accustomed to them."

Webb came from the bush, and a snake was just a snake to him. He stepped forward inside the hut and began to look around.

"Well, where is it now?"

"I don't know—it seemed to vanish. I suppose it went through the thatch."

"Could be. Probably wasn't a dangerous one. They're mostly rat-snakes up here. Very useful. Keep the rats down a treat.

Mayer shivered. "Thank you, I prefer the rats. But this one was a cobra—I saw its head."

"That so? Well, they're usually more frightened than you are. They won't attack unless you force them to."

"What about the king cobra—hamadryad, isn't it?"

"Yes, he's different. Goes for you on sight. But you don't get them up here, only in dry, stony country."

"I hope you are right. Well, let us get back to work."

In the evening, the two men usually separated after their meal. Mayer went to his hut and read paper-backed novels, usually finishing a bottle of rum by the time he went to bed.

Webb avoided drinking with him as far as possible. Rum had a bad effect on Mayer's never genial disposition and each time they had spent an evening drinking together they had nearly come to blows. Webb was studying engineering and used

"Snake under my jacket," gasped Mayer, clutching the material away from his body. Webb rushed forward with a knife

that as an excuse to keep to his own hut after nightfall.

That night, about nine o'clock, Webb was reading by the yellow light of a hurricane lamp. A cloud of insects whined shrilly round the light; outside the everlasting chirrup of thousands of crickets was punctuated by occasional bursts of laughter from the labourers, squatting round their fires.

Then he heard a strangled yell from Mayer's hut. As he hesitated it was repeated. Picking up the lamp he ran to the hut.

Mayer was sitting behind his table, his face pale and shiny in the lamplight. With both hands he was clutching the lower part of his open bush packet.

Webb was appalled by the sick terror in Mayer's staring eyes. As Mayer saw him standing there, he gasped out a few disjointed words.

"Knife—give me a knife. Snake under my jacket!"

Webb was incredulous and his eyes strayed to the rum bottle, noting that it was three-quarters empty. Mayer almost screamed at him.

"Hurry—don't stand there, damn you!"

Having no knife with him Webb glanced round the hut. On a chair was the Gurkha kukri which Mayer always carried on his belt. Drawing the keen blade he rushed up to Mayer, who held the tightly clutched fold of material as far from his body as possible. Webb sliced through it with the kukri and Mayer threw the severed piece of cloth wildly away from him.

Carrying the kukri ready for action, Webb cautiously approached the piece of tattered cloth. There was no sign of movement and he poked at it with the point of the blade.

Then he bent down and picked out a piece of thick cord, holding it up under Mayer's nose.

"Whistle lanyard," he said laconically.

Mayer gasped and stammered. "But it is not possible—I felt it move! I know it moved!"

"You want to lay off the sherbet, chum," said Webb.

Mayer glared. "Mind your own damned business." He turned his back. Webb shrugged and went back to his own hut.

At breakfast next morning Mayer looked so hag-ridden that Webb asked him if he was ill.

"I had a filthy night. Nothing but dreams; dreams all about snakes. After yesterday I see them everywhere I go. From the corner of my eye I see them gliding towards me, but when I turn there is nothing."

"You're in a bad way, Mayer. Why don't you take the day off and get some rest?"

"No, I'm all right," said Mayer gruffly. He got up from the table and stumbled out, hands shaking, bloodshot eyes staring.

Webb finished his breakfast and then went out to supervise the foundations of a bridge across a small river near the camp.

It was at about ten o'clock that it happened.

Webb saw men running and heard Mayer shouting hoarsely. Looking up, he saw the thick figure waving a spade threateningly at something hidden in the grass.

Pulling out his pistol, Webb began to run. He was about sixty yards away and, as he approached, he could hear what Mayer was shouting.

"—now I have you—I can see you—you will not escape again——" As he shouted, Mayer whirled the spade excitedly about him.

When Webb was still ten yards off, a graceful, slim shape reared, poised, and struck—struck so fast that it was just a dark streak, so hard that the hand holding the spade was dashed back by the impact. It was an unbelievably powerful and vicious action and must have covered ten feet with that one steely dart forward at Mayer.

Webb's mouth went dry. A king cobra, he thought incredulously.

He went on, but carefully now, intently watching the ground around him, his finger tense on the trigger of the heavy automatic.

There was no sign of the snake when he reached Mayer, now lying on the ground with a clay-pale face.

Webb saw the two angry punctures, right on top of the blood vessels of the wrist. The murderous venom was in the man's main bloodstream and nothing could save him.

Nevertheless, Webb did what he could.

In less than half an hour it was over. Webb rose wearily to his feet and threw a blanket over the horror that had been Mayer.

The labourers had made a wide circle round him as Mayer died, and Webb started to tell them to get back to their work. Suddenly he realized they were paying no attention to him. Every eye was fixed in silent terror on something behind him. He turned round, half expecting to see the great snake again.

A little way up the slope from Mayer's body stood the Man. He was looking at the blanket-covered heap without expression.

As Webb turned, the Man looked up, and their gaze met.

In the black, motionless eyes, there was no malignancy, no triumph, nothing but the still, dusty gleam, though from his still body there suddenly came to Webb a sense of menace, of controlled, deadly power.

Then the Man turned and walked slowly away, so smoothly that he seemed to glide rather than walk over the vivid grass. Effortlessly, he climbed the slope leading to the little village, and Webb could hear the harsh, frightened breathing of the men about him.

Yusuf was beside him, his limbs trembling. Webb controlled his voice with an effort and spoke firmly to the quivering interpreter.

"Yusuf, I am in charge now. Tell that headman that we shall not use his village. After all, it will only take a short time to have our own huts built."

As Yusuf walked reluctantly towards the path leading to the village, Webb went to the office and settled down to compose a long telegram.

Gradually the men drifted back to their work on the bridge.

At first they were silent, but as they dug in the golden sunshine they forgot their fear quickly and their laughing voices were heard again.

GREEN GROW THE RUSHES

Continued from page 12

with the healthy, uninhibited enthusiasm of a young animal, brought no illumination; the greater secret remained, inviolable.

Then she knew it was no longer to be ignored. Resenting bitterly her ignorance among so much knowledge, she determined to rout it out and make it her own. And though it was not long before her suspicions took a definite shape, confirmation and participation eluded her.

It was not altogether surprising. Janet Cuffley, her mother, had died when her daughter was five. Meg was brought up ostensibly by her father, assisted sometimes by George Pollock, the veteran compositor of the *Post*, and frequently, to Tom Cuffley's inordinate chagrin, by the neighbours. She became, therefore, in a measure everybody's child and was much loved.

It was instinctive in Portenoy to keep Meg out of trouble, to protect her, to bring her up as they felt right and proper—and indeed they had not wholly bungled the job.

AND it was clear that among the matters into which she should emphatically not be initiated was that in which she herself was most interested. It was not so much that the marshmen were acutely conscious of guilt in that respect—rather to the contrary; but, since the law took exception to it they felt that young Meg Cuffley should not become accessory in any way.

For the marshmen themselves, accustomed for several hundred years to saying very little to anybody about anything, it was not difficult to hold their tongues. For Meg, however, their silence was a challenge.

She was hurt and angry that she was, for some reason she could not fathom, left in ignorance.

Since they would not tell her, she decided she would find out for herself. She began to watch and to wait.

In the early evening of that day she left the offices of the *Post*, told George Pollock she would not be back that evening, and cycled briskly to the "Antelope."

There was a small, very old open car standing outside the entrance to the inn; no sign of the big black vehicle she had been told the sub-commission was using. She leaned her bicycle against the wall and entered. She looked for John Wickes, the publican.

The saloon was empty; so, too, was the little office down the corridor. She opened the door of the parlour. There was a man at the table in the bay of the window. A seaman's cap lay by the glass of beer in front of him.

HAMMOND had seen the girl ride up to the door, through the curtained window of the parlour; the handlebars of her bicycle were visible through the net now. He had seen her once or twice before, though distantly.

He wished Wickes would hurry; it was unwise to sit here long. He heard the girl rapping on the little hatch which opened on to the bar beyond. There was no answer. Staring out of the window Hammond felt the bright eyes on his back.

"It doesn't look as though there's anybody in," she said, "does it?"

The voice bubbled with laughter. He wondered why she should find the fact so entertaining, and raised his head. He met the steady gaze, alive with curiosity. He saw the eyes fall to the cap on the table, to his blackened hands, the seaboots he wore, and rise again to his unshaven face.

He felt that the interest was both clinical and personal.

Who was this man, she was asking herself, and what was his business in Portenoy? He looked like a sailor of some kind; yet there was something in his manner which was not that of a man who knew nothing but the sea. He was, additionally, young, but not too young; there were lines about the mouth and eyes which spoke of both pain and humour.

"Who are you?" she asked frankly.

He grinned. "A sailor."

Then John Wickes was at the window of the bar.

"If there *is* another way of building a boat in a bottle, he doesn't know it!"

FOR three days Meg Cuffley had resisted her father's efforts to hold her to her promise to go shooting with him. Her evasion was in vain. Tom Cuffley would have sacrificed his newspaper for a morning's shooting in the marsh.

So finally Meg had given in with as good a grace as she could muster.

Now her father's voice came to her through the rushes.

"Are you all right there, my dear?"

"Yes," she answered without conviction.

"Good. Then I'll get along to my perch," he whispered hoarsely. "Don't forget—both barrels. And if they're flying high, give 'em a good two fingers' lead. Got your coffee?"

"Yes."

"Right. Enjoy yourself."

She smiled to herself in the darkness, though a little wryly. For this was part of the bargain: that she should enjoy herself. If she did not, then she would have to keep him company again and again—till she had.

In fact she usually *did* enjoy their shooting expeditions together. Only the preliminaries were hateful—being woken at three o'clock in the morning, for instance.

Meg heard her father pick up the paddle and dip it gently in the water. It gurgled softly about the blade and the punt moved away from the bank. Soon it was gone and she was alone.

The marsh shimmered under the stars. Behind her and to her left, the dark waters whispered among the reeds, for she was at the junction of two waterways.

The broader of these two, which was called Burleigh Gutt, ran eastwards through the bird sanctuary and so to the sea.

The other, one of the thousand with which the marsh was laced, had no name. Where the two conjoined the rushes grew thick and dense.

Among the rushes there was a little hummock of turf that was relatively dry. Meg settled herself on the hummock with the gun across her knees and stood the flask of coffee between her booted legs. She drew the collar of her jerkin closer round her neck.

The girl did not like admitting, even to herself, that she was afraid of the marsh. She tried to attribute the chill along her forearms to excitement. This, coupled with not having had enough sleep that night, made her more than usually susceptible to the eeriness of the place.

WHERE she sat now had once been the sea bed. The starlit mist, the languid movement of the reeds in the almost motionless air, the infinite loneliness—all strengthened the illusion that the sea had returned again and that soon she would sight, far above her head, the keel of a great galleon, and watch its foamy wake across the sky.

Far away to the south the Dungeness light winked. She watched it for a little while.

Soon now the blackness in the east would melt and across the pallid face of dawn the geese would flight, muttering among themselves.

Her father, she thought, would by now have found his site, would be crouching down among the reeds somewhere to her right, three or four hundred yards away, waiting for the dawn.

Meg opened the flask and sipped a little coffee. She stood it on the turf at her feet. Then she sat back and closed her eyes.

She did not know how long she had dozed, nor what it was that had woken her. All she knew was that, whatever it was, she was afraid of it.

She looked hurriedly at the sky, her hands closing round the gun. The sky was silent, empty. The horizon in the east was scarcely tinted.

THE thing that roused her must have been a rat, she thought. There were many in the marsh—big water rats. She listened, her eyes heavy with sleep.

The noise again!

She forced her eyes fully open and lifted her head. Her limbs seemed in the grip of a clamp. Her heart beat wildly. It was no animal that had made that sound.

What she saw froze her into immobility.

It was a boat—a boat moving silently through the rushes. There was one man at the stem, another at the stern, dark figures against the darker background of the bank beyond.

They had paddles, and the sound she had heard was the soft scrape of the blade against the flat flank of the punt.

In the floor of the boat, piled high one upon the other, there were wooden boxes; a tarpaulin had been flung carelessly over them.

The boat was so close she could have reached out and touched the men. But she did not move, nor could, at that moment. She sat perfectly still, parting her lips so that her breathing should not be heard.

Slowly the punt moved past and was swallowed up in the mist, the water slapping gently at the flat prow and gurgling about the paddles.

The girl now drew a deep breath, then tensed herself again. For here was another boat.

It went past her without a sound. And here was a third.

She leaned forward a little to see plainly, if she could, the faces of the men with the paddles. There was light enough now—the sky in the east was green—but the rushes obstructed her view and she dared not disturb them.

IN the last of the three punts there were three men; the third lay idly on his back on the tarpaulin which covered the boxes, smoking.

She saw the glowing tip of the cigarette, and, before the smoke drifted across her face, she made a mental note of the outline of his head and of the long, relaxed body. She had seen this man before—somewhere.

Soon, the third boat, too, had moved up the stream and vanished.

The girl found that she was trembling all over.

She moved the gun across her knee to stretch her legs. Then she sat very still, thinking.

She saw a tall thin figure on the opposite bank of the Gutt at the same moment that she heard the mallard.

With her finger on the trigger and the gun halfway to her shoulder, she stopped. She saw the man, sharply etched against the coming daylight. He was alone, walking briskly towards the bridge a couple of hundred yards upstream. He limped.

Then the duck came over. She had never seen so many; the sky seemed filled with the whirr of wings and liquid voices. But she lowered the muzzle of the gun.

In the mist, away to her right, she heard the booming of her father's old twelve-bore. Colonel Gill must have heard it, too, for he stopped to stare across the marsh towards the sound, then hastened away.

Meg knew that her father would ask her why she hadn't fired.

To be continued next week

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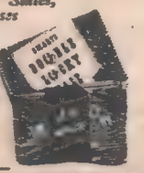

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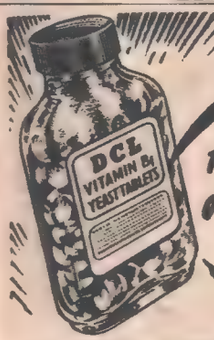

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Very subtle old Chinese curse. Though in these days lots of us will see the point quickly enough. Whether we like them or not, these *are* our times and the thing to do is to live them as fully as possible. So much happening. So many things to see and to hear. So many problems to try to understand. So much to think about, and puzzle about and—thank goodness—to laugh at.

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C.R.C.101

The clock struck 13

With a burglar in the house and the master away, the old grandfather clock decided to turn watch-dog

by ***WILL SCOTT***

The hall was full of neighbours arguing about the clock. When the major turned up, he had quite a struggle getting in

ILLUSTRATED BY TONY WEARE

I WAS A BURGLAR once. Just the once. You've got to be born to most things.

I've been sorry about it many a time since. I liked Bancross. It was the sort of town I could have settled in for life. I thought I was settled in it for life, too. But I had to get out after my burglary.

It started quite accidentally. I was in the Railway Hotel one night and there were two men there talking about plates—antiques, those things people put on their walls for decoration. The two men were strangers to me, and it turned out that one of them was a collector and he wanted just one certain plate to make up a set.

He was telling the other man how he'd looked all over the place—London, everywhere—but he hadn't been able to pick up this particular plate. He described the plate, and that's when I started to listen a bit harder.

The plate had to have eight curly sides, with a picture in the middle of a castle and a bridge, all in black. It had to have a kind of criss-cross design round the edge. Then it would be a genuine something-or-other.

He said he'd give thirty pounds there and then to anybody who could let him have that particular plate. And that's where I butted in.

"You'll excuse me," I said, "but I couldn't help hearing what you were saying to your friend. About this plate. As a matter of fact, I think I know where I might be able to get the very plate you've been talking about."

Collectors are funny people. I might have had leprosy, but you could tell that he'd still have loved the sight of me. He almost turned his back on his pal and there was nobody but me for the minute. He wanted to know where and what and when.

That's where I had to make up one or two details.

I knew where the plate was all right. I was single at the time, helping a man named Harris with a window-cleaning round. He did one end of the town, I did the other, and I used to see this plate every week through a little back window, one floor up, at a Major Merrit's house. Major Merrit was a collector, too, but just for the fun of the thing. His house was like a one-man museum.

Naturally, I wasn't going to tell this man in the Railway Hotel about it. I didn't see why there shouldn't be a bit in it for myself. So I put up a fancy story. I invented an old aunt. I said I didn't know if she'd be willing to part with this plate, but I'd find out and meet him again in the Railway Hotel at the weekend and let him know.

He said he'd be interested to see the plate and see if it was genuine, but that didn't worry me. I guessed the junk the major collected wasn't *junk*, if you know what I mean. The only trouble would be getting him to part with it.

What I meant to do was call on him and put it to him and get five per cent for myself if there was a deal. But one morning, setting off on my round, I dropped in at the station for a newspaper, and there was Major Merrit, dressed in his best, talking to some of his pals. He had a loud voice, the major, and you only had to listen. There was a man trying to get him round to the club that night, but he said he had to go up to London for the day and he wouldn't be home till a quarter to twelve.

He saw me and gave a nod, then he went through to the platform with the others. Of course, that wasn't the time to bring up this matter of the old plate, so I bought my newspaper and left the station.

After a bit I was glad I hadn't mentioned the plate. It seemed to me that Major Merrit wasn't short of thirty pounds, and he'd so much junk in his house I doubted if he'd ever miss the thing if it went.

I can't explain what came over me, but I began to work things out.

Having cleaned the major's windows for some time, I knew the inside of his house pretty nearly as well as I knew the outside. I knew the household, too. Youngish wife and a couple of youngsters, one about five, the other about three. They had a woman who came in every day, but she didn't sleep in.

WHAT I was after was getting the plate and keeping the job of cleaning the major's windows. Even if he did miss it later on, I didn't want him to connect it with me. I didn't mean to go on burgling as a sort of sideline.

I wasn't counting on much trouble as regards getting in and out. The only thing was whether or not the major's wife would go to bed early.

However, she did, so that was all right.

It was a quiet part where the major lived and I was on the spot about ten o'clock, at the back of a tree, with nobody to see me.

The lights went out downstairs about a quarter past ten, and the last one went out upstairs about half past. I gave Mrs. Merrit about half an hour to get to sleep, then I was in.

That was easy enough, because there was a back window I'd once repaired for the major. I knew its little peculiarities. I got through the kitchen, into the hall and upstairs into the room where the plate was without making a sound. And I didn't hear a sound from Mrs. Merrit or the two nippers.

I didn't need a light. I knew where that plate was by heart, as you might say. I was just going to get it off the wall when the big grandfather clock down in the hall began to strike.

You know how it is when a clock's striking. You've got to count it, in your head. I counted right on to eleven, then I turned for the picture again.

Then the clock struck twelve!

It's surprising how much thinking you can do in a short time when you've got to. First I thought I was an hour wrong in my reckoning. Then I thought I couldn't be. The major was coming home at a quarter to twelve, and he wasn't home yet, so it couldn't be twelve. Then I thought they must have forgotten to alter the clock the last daylight-saving time. Then my thoughts gave a jump, as if they'd been kicked.

The clock struck thirteen!

I've had surprises during my life, but

I can't bring back one that ever bettered that. You've got to remember where I was and what I was up to and that it was the first time I'd gone in for that line. Underneath the excitement—for I was excited, all right—I was no doubt ready for the lights going up or the door being opened or the major returning before his time or the police rushing in, but I just wasn't ready for the clock striking thirteen.

Then it struck fourteen!

Just for a second I didn't know whether I'd gone mad or the clock had. What with the late hour and the darkness and the quiet—apart from the clock—it was a bit *uncanny*. It would have been silly in the middle of the day, but it wasn't silly then, you can take it from me.

The clock struck fifteen. It struck sixteen. It went *on*. . . .

And I just had to go on counting with it. I suppose what I ought to have done was take a hint that things were likely to come unstuck. I ought to have made a bolt for it. But I felt a bit like a rabbit having a good look at a snake. I don't think I could have stopped counting then to save my life.

Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen. . . . And in no time at all it was twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine. . . .

Well, it couldn't go on like that for long. Something was bound to happen, and I knew what—and that's when it happened, and I stopped being surprised and began to get the wind-up.

I heard a light snap and a door creak. Then another light snapped, outside on the landing. It was shining right into the little room where I was and I made a quick dodge behind a chair. Then I heard Mrs. Merrit.

"Henry!" she called.

SHE must have had the idea that the major was home and playing about with his antiques downstairs. Back of that chair I nearly stopped breathing. I felt as cold as ice, but when I touched my cheeks I was burning hot. If only I could get away, I thought. Oddly enough I can remember suddenly hating the stranger I'd met in the Railway Hotel. Everything was his fault, the way I was beginning to see things.

Mrs. Merrit called again, but, of course, she didn't get an answer. I could tell she was standing at the staircase rail looking down into the dark hall, wondering what it was about.

All the time, don't forget, the clock was tinging away—fifty-six, fifty-seven, fifty-eight. Or whatever it was. I'd had such a jolt when the major's wife came out on the landing that I'd stopped counting. But the damned row kept on all the same. Every stroke was like sticking a pin in my nerves.

I heard another light snap, then her footsteps. I knew what she'd done. She'd pressed the two-way switch and put the light on in the hall and gone down to see for herself. She'd be standing in front of the grandfather clock, looking pretty bad tempered, from what I knew of her.

Ting — ting — ting — ting — ting — ting — ting. . . . That old clock had a high-pitched chime. It was a ghastly row. It wouldn't let you think or make any sort of a plan. *Silvery* you might have called it, if you hadn't been hiding behind a chair. It made me sweat. All I wanted now was to get out while there was a fair chance. But *how* was another matter.

Then something else happened to stop me getting bored. The row the clock was making woke up one of the kids and it started to howl for its mother. And that woke up the other one and then they were both at it. And upstairs, Mrs. Merrit came at the run, to pacify them.

Old grandfather downstairs must have been striking about seventy-five o'clock by this time. Yes, I know it *sounds* funny, but *was* it? My hands were shaking like blades of grass in a breeze.

Well, there were the two kids bawling their little insides out, there was mother trying to soothe them down and there was I hiding behind the chair in the little back room. With the grandfather clock hard at it in the hall, without a break.

One of the kids wanted to know what it was all about, but all his mother could say was that it was the clock, and when he asked her to stop it she said she didn't know how. She said she didn't understand grandfather clocks. She said daddy knew, but daddy was out. This seemed to frighten the kids for some reason or other, and they started to howl louder than ever. It was hell on earth.

Mrs. Merrit was rather a fool of a little woman. She couldn't cope when things went wrong. I wanted to shout out: "Take off the weights and stop it!" Which shows what the jagging "ting-ting" of a clock can do to you when it keeps on.

So there we all stayed for a time. There was nothing else to do. The clock downstairs must have been getting well on into the hundreds by this time. It was enough to turn your hair grey.

By hook or by crook I had to get out of that house. And now seemed to be the time; if I was quick. The din of the kids and the clock would cover any little noise I might make.

So I eased out from behind that chair and risked it. I couldn't be seen from the kids' bedroom. I tiptoed downstairs into the hall and made for the front door. No navigating the kitchen and the back quarters this time. I wanted to be *out*. But I couldn't keep my eyes off the grandfather clock. The nearer I got to it the more horrible it seemed to me. Ting — ting — ting — ting — ting! Right *at* me. I could imagine it was *looking*.

I couldn't stand it. I grabbed the doorknob . . . and then somebody began to hammer on the knocker outside!

I nearly jumped out of myself. I didn't stop to think this time. I didn't even think, "Police!" The dining-room was just on my left. I dashed in and pulled the door after me, leaving a crack wide enough to peep through. I was in a horrible state.

The next minute or two I'll never forget if I live to be a hundred. The kids howling, the knocker going rat-tat-tat over and over again, Mrs. Merrit upstairs shouting something I couldn't make out, somebody outside shouting something else I couldn't make out—and the old clock doing its stuff on top of everything, joining all the other sounds together.

It was all I could do to stop myself adding to it all by *bawling*. My nerves were on the jump. It was the craziest lot of noise I've ever listened to.

I don't know what Mrs. Merrit thought was going on at the doorknocker, but it couldn't get her downstairs for a long time. In the end she opened a window in the kids' bedroom and found a whole crowd of neighbours outside the front door. She said she'd be down in a minute, and after that the shouting and the hammering stopped. But then I heard something else.

"Six hundred and eighty-nine—six hundred and ninety—six hundred and ninety-one. . . ."

Somebody outside was keeping count of the old clock's performance!

MUCH more of this, I thought, and I shall go off my head. You see, I couldn't get out of that dining-room. The only parts of the window that opened were a couple of little panes that pushed out on handles. I couldn't have got away in a thousand years without smashing more glass and adding to the general din. And they'd have had me at once.

Mrs. Merrit came downstairs at last, done up in her best dressing-gown. Through the door crack I saw her open the door. I saw two or three men come in without being asked. And there were a dozen or two standing about outside.

Mrs. Merrit and the men began shouting all together and pointing to the old clock, but there was so much row going on that none of them could tell what the others were saying. Mrs. Merrit looked half in a raging temper and half scared to death by the din.

One of the men was a bossy little buffer who looked as if he'd always know what to do if houses were on fire or ships were sinking.

He put his shoulders back and made straight for the clock. He was going to show 'em.

But before he could put his hand on it the clock made a whirring sort of noise and stopped. I remember thinking: That just serves you right! He was such a bossy little buffer.

I COULDN'T make you understand the sudden relief when that clock stopped. Everything in the world seemed to go quiet. Even the kids upstairs shut up and came out on the landing to look.

I don't know what I expected to happen next, but what did happen was that Mrs. Merrit began to cry.

"Run itself down," said the bossy little buffer, taking no notice of her. He opened the front of the clock. "That's it—run itself right out." Then he turned to Mrs. Merrit and started his information service. "What you ought to have done," he said, "was open her up and take off the weights."

Mrs. Merrit, wiping her eyes, said she didn't understand the things and didn't want to.

Then an argument started on the doorstep. One of the neighbours said the clock had struck 720 times. Another said it had struck 820 times. They both said they'd counted. They got quite nasty about it and Mrs. Merrit began to cry louder than ever.

By now the hall was more like a taproom than anything else. Everybody had come inside to stare at the clock, and one or two were touching it and having a look at the works. They were all telling each other how they'd heard it go on and on and on, and how they'd wondered what it was all about, and how they'd *had* to come and find out what was up.

It was a kind of public meeting.

And all at once, in the middle of it, the major turned up. He had quite a struggle to get into his own house.

He looked a bit anxious at first, but when they told him what had been happening he rounded on his wife and said she ought to have taken off the weights.

"That's what *I* said," chipped in the bossy little buffer. And the major looked as if he would hit him on the ear if he didn't shut up.

He looked at the clock for quite a time, with the crowd all giving him the details of what had happened. Then he lifted off the front of the top and looked behind the face. Then he went into the kitchen and came back with a thin pair of pliers. He was about half a minute fiddling inside the clock. Then he had the thing

THIS WEEK'S COVER

WHEN James Watt, the inventor, was watching the steam rise from the kettle. . . . But that's another story. Still, the hot potato man in Gilbert Turrall's cover painting looks as if he's taken a leaf out of Watt's copy book. Turrall was walking down a Birmingham street when he saw the hot potato machine. He says he's never seen a contraption like it.

WITH MY FEET UP · by IAN FOX

JUDGING BY THE COLUMNS of houses and flats advertised for sale or to let, you'd hardly believe there was a housing shortage. Well, here are *my* offers—as reasonable as most!

Flat to let: 1 sitt-rm, 3 bed., kitch., bath, central, rent 25s. weekly. Fittings, £3,500.

Desirable residence: 2 recep., 4 bed., usual offices, main drainage. Worth £1,500. Price for quick sale, £6,250.

Country cottage: Moorland area, lovely views. Three rooms, one outhouse. One rod, pole or perch of garden. No water, gas or electricity. Buyer to re-thatch roof. Shops 6 miles. Bus route 5 miles. Sacrifice £4,000.

TWENTY YEARS ON. *Permit To Apply For A Permit. Name*: Derek Stewart Gary Montgomery Smith. *Mother's Name*: Ethel Dolores Ermyntrude Smith. *Father's Name*: Thomas Test-tube.

* * *

LOOKING SEEDY. I recently saw an advertisement offering a job as a plant chemist. I'm not sure what this man does, unless he goes round giving aspirins to plants. "What, sir? Your delphiniums are wilting? I'm so sorry—I'll make them up a bottle of something. And you, madam? You're having trouble with your Old Man's Bedsocks? A good stiff dose of this should put them right."

striking properly. He looked at his watch and began to set it.

"It struck seven hundred and twenty times," said one of the arguers.

"Eight hundred and twenty times," said the other. "I counted them."

"So did I," said the first.

The major closed up the clock and began to look a bit bad tempered.

"Look here," he said. "I've had a hard day in London. I want to get some sleep."

The neighbours took the hint then and began to drift out, but in no great hurry. Even after the major had slammed the door I could hear the talk going on outside. The 720 man and the 820 man were getting furious with each other.

"Oh, Henry!" sobbed Mrs. Merrit. "It's been *awful*!"

He told her that anybody but a fool would have taken off the weights, and when she said she didn't understand about such things he said there was no need to *cry*. The savage way he said it made her cry more than ever.

Well, they took their row upstairs and carried it on in the bedroom, and I tried to pull myself together. I was in a pretty bad state by then. The neighbours had gone home and it was all quiet outside. I crept out into the dark hall and began to fumble for the key of the front door.

I'd lost interest in the plate. It was still on the wall upstairs, but I didn't care any more. I only wanted to be out and off. I'd had enough burgling for one lifetime. There's that bit about looking a gift horse in the mouth. I'd had rare luck, as well as a lesson. That clock had roused the neighbours and started a family row for the major, but nobody had found *me*.

It isn't many burglars who are lucky enough to survive 820 strikes on a clock. "Leave well alone" was my motto at that moment.

And then—well, you'd never guess in a month of Sundays. Before I could get my hand on the key in the darkness—that damned clock began to strike twelve!

THIS time it *was* twelve. The major had put the clock okay. But it must have been on his nerves or his mind or something. Anyway, I heard a thump on the landing. The two-way switch clicked, all the lights went up and there he was at the staircase rail, glaring down at the clock.

"Not again!" he was muttering. "You try it again, my beauty! I'll *smash* you!"

It's funny how sometimes you don't see what you're not looking for. The major never saw me while that clock was striking twelve. I got my hand on the key. After that I didn't move.

Then the clock finished striking twelve and the major said, "Ah!" Then he saw me. . . .

His mouth just fell open. I must have been the very last person he expected to see then and there. The window cleaner, inside his house at midnight!

"What the hell's all this in aid of?" he shouted.

I didn't stop to tell him. I twisted that key round and I was *out*. He was in his pyjamas and bare feet and there wasn't much he could do. As I hared down the street I heard him at the front door shouting, "Hi!" I heard his wife calling and asking him what was the matter. I heard the kids starting to bawl again. But I didn't wait.

Well, you'll see why I had to clear out of Bancross. It would have taken too long to explain things if I'd stayed there. And I've never been back. A pity—I'd taken quite a fancy to the place.

What? No. I'm okay. It's only that clock over there. It's just going to strike. I'm always like that when I hear a clock strike, these days. I'll be all right in a minute.

They all expect something, but it's difficult to know how much

I suppose one must

by HERBERT HODGE

WHENEVER I FEEL I deserve, and can afford, a little self-indulgence I treat myself to a ride in a taxi. Down comes the flag and off we go through the traffic—with the driver having all the worry—while I loll back on the cushion, roll a cigarette and look through the window at the crowds scrambling for buses.

For an old taxi-driver like me, this is the very pinnacle of luxury. If I could afford it I'd ride about in cabs all day. I don't know of any sensation to beat it.

If I've got a lot of calls to make in a short time a taxi is a necessity, of course; and a quite legitimate expense. On most inner London journeys taking a taxi can make the difference between ten minutes and half an hour.

It isn't only that the driver knows all the short cuts. It's the time saved by travelling direct, from door to door. No bus queues. No escalators. No waiting. No worrying. No walking. You can make twice the calls in half the time, and be cool, calm and collected at the end of it.

But whether they can afford to use taxis regularly or only now and again, most of my friends tell me that instead of enjoying the taxi ride they spend most of the time wondering how much to tip the driver. They don't want to give him too little, but they hate the idea of giving him too much. And this continual worry puts them off taxis altogether.

I tell them they need never worry about giving a taxi-driver too much. That's impossible. A London taxi-driver depends a great deal on his tips. Besides, if he wants a decent cab to drive he often has to do his own share of tipping at the garage. Knowing the conditions of the trade, I never give the driver less than a ninepenny tip, even when the fare is only ninepence.

The idea of giving a ninepenny tip on a ninepenny fare shocks most people. They say it's daft. So it may be. But that isn't because the tip is too large. It's because the initial fare is too small. If you think of that eighteenpence simply as a total payment for services rendered it hardly seems too much for having a whole man and a whole motor car at your personal disposal, does it?

No Custom, No Wage

If the taxi-driver's been waiting on the rank for you he's still doing the ninepenny job at a loss, even though you're giving him double fare. Nobody's paying him wages while he's waiting to be hired. He works on commission only—a penny out of each threepence on the meter.

A ninepenny tip is the minimum for a London taxi, in my opinion—up to a fare of three shillings. Above that, twenty-five per cent on the fare.

Of course, this whole business of tipping is wrong—in a democratic society. As a taxi-driver, I used to writhe under it sometimes—especially when the passenger obviously begrudged the tip or started to get grandiloquent.

When it became more than I could bear I'd politely refuse his tip and leave him staring open mouthed on the kerb. It was a sight well worth its price—though it's a luxury that a taxi-driver who wants to be a good husband and father can very seldom afford.

I suppose tipping will go on for a long time yet, wherever it's a case of personal service. In hotels, restaurants, barbers' shops and such places, the tip still persists—even when the charges have been raised; and the wages, too.

Waiters, barbers, porters and cloakroom attendants still expect something—and it's difficult to know how much. In hotels and restaurants I usually give ten per cent of the bill if I get good service, more to anyone who gives me extra-special service, and nothing at all to those who do nothing for me.

But I'd rather pay a fixed charge, with good service taken for granted, and feel that a few words of appreciation were all that was expected in return for extra-good service. I'd like to see tipping completely abolished—and replaced by adequate wages and pride in the job. But that seems to be asking too much of human nature at the moment.

I certainly prefer giving a tip to taking one. But just as I used to feel self-contempt when I took tips from others (although my bread and butter depended on it), so now I can't help feeling a little contempt—whether justified or not—for the man who fusses around me for the sole purpose of getting a tip. Especially when he cringes for it.

Gives Me the Creeps

Politeness—as between equals—is the only worthwhile relationship. Bowing and scraping gives me the creeps. I can never understand how a grown man can stoop to it.

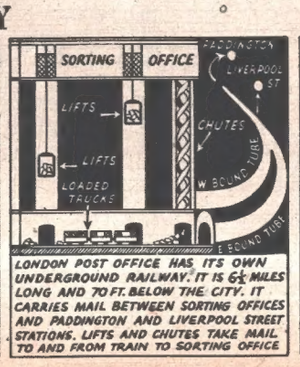
But knowing from experience a taxi-driver's difficulties, I can't bear to feel I've let down anybody who has to live on tips. So whenever I'm in doubt I tip well, just to be on the safe side. If I can't afford to tip well I keep away from those places.

The one thing I won't do is to tip beforehand, in expectation of favours to come. I feel a tip is not a tip then. It's a bribe. Besides, I've got a violent objection to the type of little jack-in-office who expects to be offered a bribe for deigning to do for me what he's already paid to do for everybody.

If he insists on it I'd rather give him a punch on the nose. It may be equally wrong, as a beginning; but, in my opinion, it promises a far more satisfactory end.

UNCLE ANDY

The Mail Goes by Tube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PADDINGTON
LIVERPOOL ST
LIFTS
CHUTES
LIFTS
LOADED TRUCKS
W. BOUND TUBE
E. BOUND TUBE
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THE TRAINS ARE ELECTRIC AND SELF-DRIVEN. THEY TRAVEL AT AN AVERAGE OF 25 M.P.H. AND CAN BE AUTOMATICALLY STOPPED AT ANY OF THE TUBES 8 STATIONS TO DELIVER OR PICK UP MAIL.
PORTERS WHEEL MAIL TRUCKS ON TO TRAIN

LEVERS INSIDE SWITCH ROOM CONTROL TRAIN MOVEMENTS, DIRECTING THEM ON TO MAIN LINE, REVERSE LOOP OR SIDING AS REQUIRED. ...TING PANEL SHOWS SWITCHMAN POSITIO... OF EVERY TRAIN IN HIS SECTION. AUTOMATIC STOPPING DEVICES BAR COLLISIONS

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plus Regentone

RADIOGRAM

and

CELEBRATION

in London for Two

3,069 OTHER AWARDS

£100, £25, £20, £15, 5 of £10, 10 of £2.10, 50 of £1—3,000 New Prizes

BONUSES—£2 FAMILY HAMPERS

Each cash prize for *Bullet* which was one of four or more efforts on single coupon (or plain paper entry sheet) will be accompanied by £2 FAMILY HAMPER, containing FOWL, FRUIT and other luxuries for a WEEKEND FEAST.

RULES 1. First Prize to best *Bullet* received, others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in JOHN BULL dated February 26, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding.

ADDRESS ENTRY

"BULLETS" 1,665 (or XWORD 617) "JOHN BULL," LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C.2 (COMP.).

Who's next for a Fortune and Celebration?

Prizes value over £1,500 in Record Postwar Offer

"IT seems almost unbelievable," said reader E. Beighton, "that in so short a time I've jumped from one minor success to *Bullets* First Prize!"

But this young scientist (whose home is at 29 Victoria Terrace, Leeds) believed it all right when he banked his £750 cheque and arrived in London with his wife for a round of weekend gaiety provided by JOHN BULL. Here you see them revelling in the circus; stalls for a pantomime, luxury seats for a new film and the free use of a car were other thrills of their New Year celebration in London.

* * *

For this week only, in a record postwar offer of prizes value over £1,500, the cash for the best *Bullet* has shot up to £1,000. And with that fortune for a few well-chosen words go a fine modern radiogram *and* a celebration weekend such as brought from Mr. Beighton the comment: "Wonderful—memorable—we'll never forget it!"

Your coupon is waiting below—see that you post it by Monday, January 31!

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "Examples"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

Way Britain's Going
Working For Peace
Ring-master Uno
Through The Blizzard
Jam Tomorrow
We Thought
March Of Time
Not So Easy
Old-fashioned
In The Works
A Treasure
Loud And Long
The Killjoys
Given Up
In Sandy's Pocket
Opened His Eyes
Money's Tight, So
Village Romeo
Makes Life A Song

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

The Wrong.....
.....Of Civilization
Man Who.....
Heard On The.....
Keeps Grandpa.....
It Means....., But

£100 WON OUTRIGHT
XWORD 613

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Bolster. 4, Bolt. 6, Lay. 9, Rom. 11, Class. 13, Gale or Gate. 14, Nets. DOWN: 1, Boats. 2, Show. 3, Toys. 5, Loses. 7, Bowling. 8, Brows. 10, Wages. 12, Time.

£100 OUTRIGHT WINNER: W. Clarke, 88 Alexandra Road, Crosby, Liverpool, 23.

Awards value £25 for Runners-up shared between 23 entrants. In addition Winner and Runners-up receive Breakfast, Dinner and Tea Services.

"BULLETS" WINNERS No. 1,661

FIRST PRIZE, £250 plus RADIOGRAM: Mrs. L. C. Rolfe, 6 The Terrace, Barnes, S.W.13:
NO MORE BATTLEFIELDS IF MAN *Shared* "PASTURES"

SECOND PRIZE, £25: J. D. Ross, 15 Chesterfield Road, Laira, Plymouth: PROPERLY PREPARED—SONNY—DAD, "GOOD SCOUT."

THIRD PRIZE, £10: T. Hatton, 36 Parry Street, Seacombe, Wallasey: PRIMITIVE MAN — UNDEVELOPED — ONLY *Half* BEAST!

OTHER AWARDS. £9: H. E. Sharman, 114 March Road, Coates, Whittlesea: I'M NOT IMPORTANT, BUT—"BAND" WELCOMES ME HOME! £8: E. Cleaver, 38 Smeaton Street, Barrow-in-Furness: SPENDS ITSELF—"SAVING," BLOOD WE "BANK." £7: A. Cooper, 85 Hanover Terrace, Brighton: WHISTLING — ON MARS' "ERRANDS," JETS? £6: R. Roskell, 30 Breck Road, Liverpool, 4: WE WISH—OLIVE-BRANCH, A *Live* BRANCH!

FIVE of £5: G. C. Jenkinson, 7 South Street, Morton, Bingley: WHISTLING—AT WORK, GRANDPA'S *Chest*! C. H. Lawdham, 22 Twyford Court, London, N.10: NOW DAD'S A TERRIER—MEDALS REAPPEARING — AND CHEST! V. E. Hopper, 565 St. Saviour's Road, Crown Hills, Leicester: EASY ON THE TEA-POT —NOT DAD, CHRISTMAS PULLOVER! Miss M. C. Thomas, 124 Broad Street, Barry: EASY ON THE POCKETS—NOT POCKET, DAD'S SNOOKER! A. J. Mace, 71 Roslyn Road, Adswood, Stockport: PRIMITIVE MAN—DID *Feast* AFTER VICTORIES!

50 Mystery Prizes and 1,000 "Good Shots" have also been posted.

MORE HOUSEHOLD PRIZES for XWORDS

Awards value up to £250

£100 1st Prize and Awards value £25 amongst Runners-up. ★ Grand prize with each Award value £1 and over—a 100-piece Breakfast, Dinner and Tea Service!

THIS WAY TO WIN

USEFUL cheques have been won by 25 readers in the last 10 Crossword contests; work out now that puzzle below and you may win not only a cheque but one of the 100-piece Services such as have been received by 58 competitors.

First complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues on right. Then, if you wish to enter one extra Answer to any *one, two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

Across Clues — **XWORD 617**

1. Generally easy to wind up
5. Heckler may get quicker attention if he interrupts in this fashion
6. Father doesn't like his boy to be
12. May be found to be full of scum
13. Many artists dislike this of commercialism
14. May easily account for falling behind others

Down Clues

1. In financial crisis, cool-headed, capable business manager is not easy to
2. Just fits a man, in some few cases
3. Concern for this had little influence on some of history's biggest figures
4. This is soft
7. A great many of our soldiers got to know what this meant
8. Currant ones that look so promising can prove disappointing
9. You expect this from certain kind of scales
10. A legion is often described as
11. May be so deep as to miss its target

WIN A CHEQUE AND 100-in-1 PRIZE!

1 S		2 R	I	N	3 G	■	■	4	■	
	■				5 L	O		D	L	Y
.							■			
A	C	T					■	E	U	
R	A	■	6		A	D	■	A	S	7 P
E	B	8 B			I	■	9		H	A
■		U	P	R	O	O	T	■		
10				■		H	I	■	A	T
O	P	S		11	■		S	A	R	I
S	E	■	2	D	I	■	E	■	I	N
3 T	A		N	T	617		14		A	G

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d
No.		1s.
No.		2s.

(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated February 12.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

617 Closing Postmark, MON., JAN. 31,
I enclose P.O. value....
No.....
Signed .....
Address .....

STICK 2½d. STAMP here to get help of *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated Feb. 12 containing ANOTHER BIG "BULLETS" OFFER
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478
NAME .....
ADDRESS .....

EXAMPLE ..... | 6d.
BULLET
EX. ..... | 6d.
B.
EX. ..... | 6d.
B.
EX. ..... | 6d.
B.

Fee: 6d. per *Bullet* on coupon or plain paper—see Bonus Offer above.

Closing Postmark, **1,665** MON., JAN. 31.
I agree to Rules and enclose P.O. value .....
No. .....
Signed .....
Address .....

Write to John Bull About It

John Bull's expert advisers help to solve readers' personal problems. Answers on points of general interest will be published each week

Free Dentures

B. A. (*Luton*): There still appears to be much misunderstanding about dentures which can be obtained under the National Health Service. The position is that either plastic or vulcanite dentures are supplied free. In addition there is a range of metal dentures (gold, white gold and stainless steel) which are more expensive, but these, too, can be supplied free if they are considered to be *clinically* necessary. If, where it is decided that on clinical grounds a metal denture is *not* necessary, a patient would prefer this type, then it can be provided on condition that the patient pays the difference between the extra cost and that of a plastic or vulcanite denture. But this payment must be according to a specified scale and approved by the Dental Estimates Board.

Wake Up and Live!

L. D. (*Manchester*): You say there has been a "speeding up" of work in your office and you think you are being given too much to do, as you are only nineteen and not very strong. Well, you are just at an age when hard work is the best thing in the world for a young man. It seems that you are suffering badly from self pity. Stop being sorry for yourself and welcome the opportunity that is being offered to you. Get as much fresh air, exercise and sleep as you can, and forget for a time that you would like an easier job. Do not be afraid of work. Now is your chance to develop from a youth into a man.

Bus Drivers

E. N. (*Putney*): During the war London bus drivers were recruited only from the conductor grade. That practice will be continued to a limited extent in the future, but eventually drivers will be recruited direct from outside sources up to eighty per cent of requirements. The remainder will come from the conductor grade or from other staff already employed by the London Transport Executive.

Home Posting

S. F. (*Buxton*): If your son is a Regular soldier on a twenty-one years' engagement he can be sent back to this country for the last six months of his service. That will give him a chance to look round for employment and accommodation for his family. This is a privilege, not a right. The scheme was in practice before the war but has been in abeyance since 1939. Its partial reintroduction became effective on January 1. Applications can also be considered from Regulars on engagements of twelve years with the Colours, but these will not be successful where the overseas command decides that the soldier concerned cannot be spared.

Thanks!

E. C. (*Levenshulme*) *writes*: "I would like to thank you for your kind and speedy attention to my husband's case. His war pension has now been restored and all arrears paid. We are very grateful for the help you have given us."

Readers' queries (except medical) should be addressed to the John Bull Free Advice Service, 186 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Stamped envelope for reply, please.

Make Barley Water at home... this easy way

1 *Mix Robinson's 'Patent' Barley to a thin, smooth paste in cold water.*

2 *Stir paste into hot water and boil for 1 minute only. Sweeten and flavour to taste.*

3 *Strain and serve hot or cold.*

IT'S just as simple as that. And remember that although you get 192 glasses from a 1 lb. tin you need only make as much as you need at the moment.

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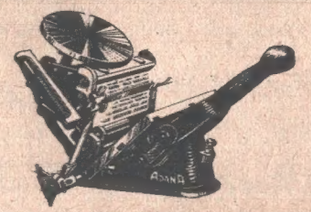

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